



판타스틱영화제

[FANTASTIC FEST 2018] AUSTIN / NEW YORK / SAN FRANCISCO / DENVER

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FROM EVRIM

Welcome back to Fantastic Fest and what we hope is your favorite eight days of the year. Our team has worked tirelessly for the past twelve months to curate films that we think truly reflect the spirit of the festival: bold, risky, diverse and exciting cinema that constantly challenges the definition of what genre can be.

Genre cinema has always carried the stigma of being "the other" — genre films are often maligned, derided, or sometimes even altogether ignored in the mainstream press. We are constantly delighted that Fantastic Fest can make a difference by elevating these films and their creators. We celebrate cinema without labels.

So here we are again. And what do we have on our menu this year? For starters, a blistering Korean theme shines a spotlight on an era of Korean cinema that is both under-represented and incredibly exciting. Once again, AGFA triumphs with some incredible choices, celebrating the

career of filmmakers like Sarah Jacobson, while offering a plethora of other repertory titles, from the much-loved to the newly-discovered, debuting in brand-new restorations.

Beyond that? We showcase cinema that reflects the world we live in. Sometimes funny, sometimes upsetting, but always complex and rewarding. Whether you are looking for the scariest horror film of the year or a new and original voice from Eastern Europe, our hope is that the program offers joy to everyone attending: tears, screams, ghosts, hauntings, murderers, survival, crime, cops, gangsters... the whole nine yards. These unique voices have the power to reflect, to entertain, to charm, and to frighten us all.

And now? My favorite part. Settle back. Let the darkness engulf you and the light begin to flicker. It's time for the movies to start...

—Evrim Ersoy
[Creative Director]

FROM PETER

O Come All Ye Fantastic, I'll try to keep this short.

During my tenure as the festival's Director of Short Film Programming, I have been so proud of how much love is expressed by the Fantastic Fest audience for the short-form cinema that both precede features and parade within our dedicated sidebars. These films are often incubators for emerging artists, and time after time, I'm told that the enthusiastic reactions they receive at Fantastic Fest have galvanized them to both continue creating, and to further grow their ambition.

As you try and see 'em all across our eight fantastic days, both our newly minted curator Jean Lauer and myself invite you to enjoy our most expansive offering of short films yet, and should you see something that splits your sides, breaks your heart, or warms your cockles, we encourage you to find that filmmaker (on social media or in person) and let them know. It'll mean the world, and make it a richer, more inspired one.

—Peter Kuplowsky
[Director of Short Film Programming]

2018 STAFF TO THANK

Adan DeLaTorre
Adrian Burwinkle
Alicia Coombs
Amy Averett
Andrew McEathron
Annick Mahnert
Bex Feldbin
Bill Norris
Brad Johnson
Brad Sorenson
Brandy Fons
Brenda Kolas
Bret Berg
Brian Kelley
Cara Roberts
Chris Bilheimer
Chris Randleman
Chris Swiderski
Chris Tarango
Corey Wilson

Curran Nault
Damon Jones
Dan Cofer
Danny Sorbera
David Marmanillo
David Monahan
Devin Steuerwald
Dylan Jones
Elijah Wood
Evrim Ersoy
Heather Smith
Henri Mazza
Jake Isgar
James Marsh
James Shapiro
Jason Metcalfe
Jay Shaw
Jean Lauer
Jenni Palmer-Lee
Jenny Jacobi

Joe Ziemba
John Gross
Josh Hurtado
Karrie League
Kayla Scroggs
Keith Ruckus
Kier-la Janisse
Kimi Sandel
Kody Sandel
Kristen Bell
Laird Jimenez
LeAnn Tinch
Logan Taylor
Luke Beyers
Luke Mullen
Madison Pope
Martin Solomon
Mason Scheer
Maxim Pozderac
Maya Perez

Mendy Black
Micaela San Miguel
Michael Wilchester
Mike Lawson
Monica Detting
Monte Monreal
Noah Lee
Peter Kuplowsky
Pierce Conran
Randy Palmer
Roger Erik Tinch
Ryan Fons
Ryan Schibi
Sebastian Del Castillo
Sonia Droulhiol
Steve Sanders
Suki-Rose Simankis
Susan Mobley
Tim League
Windy Bowlsby

Zack Carlson
Zack McGhee
Birth Movies Death
Community First Village
Fons PR
Lamar Union
South Austin Gym
The Drafthouse
Video Team
The Drafthouse
South Lamar Team
The Highball Team
The Mondo Team
The Projection Team
The Volunteer Team
Cyril Despontin
Stéphane Bouyer
NEON
Korean Film Archive

SATELLITE FESTIVALS

Fantastic Fest

Founded in 2005, Fantastic Fest is the largest genre film festival in the U.S., specializing in horror, fantasy, sci-fi, action and just plain fantastic movies from all around the world. In 2017, Fantastic Fest expanded the festival to include screenings at flagship Alamo theaters in San Francisco, New York and Denver.

Continuing to build on the success of the launch, these satellite markets will again be showcasing a highly curated selection of titles from this year's lineup as well as guests and a number of events that share the DNA and lineage of the festival.

Spanning from the 27th to the 30th September, this year's satellite markets promise to bring the excitement and the action of Fantastic Fest closer to home for those unable to attend the Austin event, as well as allowing people to experience the best in adventurous and exciting genre cinema from across the world.



NEW YORK

Alamo Drafthouse Brooklyn

PROGRAM:

- A BLUEBIRD IN MY HEART
- AN EVENING WITH BEVERLY LUFF LINN
- BLOOD LAKE
Presented by AGFA and Bleeding Skull
- CAM with director Daniel Goldhaber in attendance
- CHAINED FOR LIFE with director Aaron Stamberg in attendance
- DANGER: DIABOLIK with a live rescore by Morricone Youth
- I WAS A TEENAGE SERIAL KILLER and MARY JANE'S NOT A VIRGIN ANYMORE
- Presented by AGFA
- LORDS OF CHAOS
- TERRIFIED
- THE GUILTY
- THE NIGHT SHIFTER
- THE QUAKE
- PIERCING



SAN FRANCISCO

Alamo Drafthouse New Mission

PROGRAM:

- TERRIFIED
- A BLUEBIRD IN MY HEART
- AN EVENING BEVERLY LUFF LINN with director Jim Hosking in attendance
- BLOOD LAKE
Presented by AGFA and Bleeding Skull
- CAM
- I WAS A TEENAGE SERIAL KILLER and MARY JANE'S NOT A VIRGIN ANYMORE
- Presented by AGFA
- LORDS OF CHAOS
- PIERCING
- THE GUILTY
- THE NIGHT SHIFTER
- THE QUAKE



DENVER

Alamo Drafthouse Sloans Lake

PROGRAM:

- A BLUEBIRD IN MY HEART
- AN EVENING WITH BEVERLY LUFF LINN
- BLOOD LAKE
Presented by AGFA and Bleeding Skull
- I WAS A TEENAGE SERIAL KILLER and MARY JANE'S NOT A VIRGIN ANYMORE
- Presented by AGFA
- LORDS OF CHAOS
- TERRIFIED
- THE GUILTY
- THE NIGHT SHIFTER
- THE QUAKE
- PIERCING

판타스틱영화제

OFFICIAL
MERCHANDISE



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\$20



판타스틱영화제
[FANTASTIC FEST]



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STICKERS
\$1



판타스틱영화제
(FANTASTIC FEST)

판타스틱영화제

MOVIE ICONS

A staple of the Incredibly Strange Film Festival Guide since 1995, "the icons" are a quick visual reference guide for the movies and events in the program. The 2018 Fantastic Fest Guide continues the tradition for discerning American audiences. Want to watch a flick with children perilously attending a mermaid dinner party? No problem! Don't want to watch a cult movie with extreme violence and animal abuse? No problem! Let the icons before each movie summary guide you to complete cinematic satisfaction. Thanks again to Ant and Mike from the Incredibly Strange Film Festival in New Zealand for conceiving and executing the genre movie icon art form.

**OUR EIGHT NEW THEMES DESIGNED
EXCLUSIVELY FOR FANTASTIC FEST 2018
BY ICON KING MICHAEL SHEILS**



ANIMAL
VIOLENCE



ANIMATION



CHILDREN IN
PERIL



DINNER
PARTY



LYNCHIAN



MERMAIDS



STROBE
LIGHTING



STRONG SEXUAL
CONTENT



ABORTION



ACTION



ADULTERY



AFRO



ALCOHOL
ABUSE



ALIEN



ALTERNATE
WORLDS



ANARCHY



ANIMAL
ABUSE



ANIMAL
ATTACKS



APOCALYPSE



ASSASSINATION



AUTOMATIC
WEAPONRY



BAD TEETH



BALD SEX



BARE MAN
CHEST



BEAUTIFUL
HAIR



BIG BREASTS



BLACK
COMEDY



BLINDNESS



BLOCKBUSTER



BOLLYWOOD



BONDAGE



BREAKING THE
FOURTH WALL



BULLYING



BUNNIES



CANNIBAL



CAR CHASE



CASTRATION



CHEEZ FX



CHRIST



CINEMASCOPE



CLASSIC



CLOWN



COCAINE



COMEDY



COPROPHAGIA-
GALISTIC



CREEPY DOLLS



DANCING



DATE MOVIE



DECAPITATION



DEFENESTRATION



DICKHEAD



DIRTY COPS



DOCUMENTARY



DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE



DOUBLE FIST



DREAM
SEQUENCE



DRUGS



DUBBED



DWARF



EATING
DISORDER



EXPLOSION



EYEBALL
VIOLENCE



FACE
SLAPPING



FACE TO
CROTCH



FACE MELT



FANBOYS



FAST FOOD



FELLATIO



FILM WITHIN
A FILM



FISH HOOK
VIOLENCE



FLASHBACK



FOOD
POISONING



FULL FRONTAL



FURRIES



GANG FIGHT



GANGBANG



GAY SEX



GENDER
CONFUSION



GENETIC
MUTATION



GHOSTS



GIALLO



GIANT



GOING
INSANE



GRAPHIC
VIOLENCE



GROSS OUT



HARD-BOILED
DIALOGUE



HEAD
TRAUMA



HEIST





PARTIES & EVENTS

NIGHT BEFORE MIXER

9/19/18 • Peter Pan Putt Putt

Each year, early and excited FF-goers attend our official/unofficial night-before mingling melee at Peter Pan Mini-Golf. Festivalizers from across the globe, from decade-long veterans to FF-intimers, are invited to assemble, catch up, and formulate their attack plans for the next 8 days. We'll provide some refreshments, but it's a-ok to BYOB if yer feelin' particular. And for those who don't have the inclination to sit still and chat, there's 18 holes of neon dinosaurs, wily pirates and good good times available here for your casual, paced savage destruction. Peter Pan Mini-Golf is located just a few blocks from our home base at Alamo South Lamar, and it actually has a giant pink rabbit (you're not just drunk).

HALLOWEEN presents: OPENING NIGHT HALLOWEEN COSTUME SLASHBASH

9/20/18 • Highball

This year, Halloween comes early! Or eleven months late? Either way, we're decking out the festival (and The Highball) as a supreme extreme Halloween scream dream! All costumed creeps, creatures and cretins will collide as we turn up the night with a blazing live performance by NILBOG, the world's foremost horror theme rock band. There'll be themed games, contests, a white-knuckle candy buffet, and more chill-filled insanity than you can shake a witch at! But beware and come prepared: for the final act of the evening we will annihilate the necromantic night with a bludgeoning blood battle! Surprise... we're all going to HELLLLLL!

DOUG LOVES MOVIES PODCAST

9/21/18 • Highball

Comedian Doug Benson (SUPER HIGH ME; LAST COMIC STANDING; CHRONIC-CON) invites surprise filmmaker and comedian guests to sit down, talk movies and play movie trivia games... while drunk, stoned or both! The game is a reimagined version of the Leonard Maltin Game, which has been described as Name That Tune with movies instead of songs. The game consists of Benson reading the cast of an unknown movie in reverse order (star of the movie comes last) from Leonard Maltin's Movie Guide to his guests, who attempt to guess the movie! Come enjoy a Highball cocktail, kick back and laugh yourself into oblivion.

MALTIN ON MOVIES: (guest TBD)

9/21/18 • Highball

Legendary film critic Leonard Maltin and his daughter Jessie are the ultimate movie fans. They love talking about movies, especially with people who share their enthusiasm, from living legends like Mel Brooks, Carl Reiner and Quincy Jones to such contemporary artists as Amy Adams, Viggo Mortensen, Laura Dern and Bryan Cranston. Their list of past FF interviewees includes everyone from Bruce Campbell to Vince Vaughn to Gilbert Gottfried, and they're guaranteed to blow the doors off in 2018 with a star-studded onslaught of cinematic celebration.

FANTASTIC DEBATES

9/21/18 • South Austin Gym

Filmmaker fists! Journalist jabs!! Actor attackers!!! From verbal violence to pugilistic pummeling, we have the rage you crave at the Fantastic Debates, where the burning questions facing the fan community are resolved once and for all! Past Fantastic Debates have featured screen titans like Keanu Reeves, Elijah Wood, Michelle Rodriguez, Ti West and Udo Kier (plus a surprise visit from Dolph Lundgren!), as well as a host of critics, bloggers, bruisers and movie maniacs. Debaters to be announced shortly... and powerfully!

AGFA MIXER

09/22/2018 • Highball

The American Genre Film Archive — dedicated to keeping genre movies alive, and on the big screen — wants to meet you in person! Whether you're a theater booker, festival programmer, film critic or passionate moviegoer, join the AGFA squad in The Highball for snacks, lively chat and a short video presentation on AGFA's many daredevil acts of film preservation... including some unexpected announcements about big big film rescue developments in 2019!

SWITCHBLADE SISTERS PODCAST

09/22/2018 • Highball

Switchblade Sisters is a podcast on the Maximum Fun network providing deep cuts on genre flicks from a female perspective. Every week, film critic April Wolfe sits down with a phenomenal female filmmaker to slice-and-dice a classic genre movie – a handpicked selection from the worlds of horror, exploitation, sci-fi and many others! Along the way, they cover craft, the state of the industry, how films get made, and more. Past guests include Emily Gordon (*The Big Sick*), Karyn Kusama (*Jennifer's Body*; *The Invitation*), Heather Graham (*Boogie Nights*; *Half Magic*), Lynn Shelton (*Hump Day*; *Outside In*), Desiree Akhavan (*The Miseducation of Cameron Post*), Kate Berlant (*Sorry to Bother You*), and Tamra Davis (*Billy Madison*; *Half Baked*).

OVERLORD PARTY

09/22/2018 • Highball

BREAKING NEWS: We won World War II! So tonight we celebrate with a 1940s-appropriate performance by big band barnburners, along with a high-kicking cadre of daredevil dancers. BUT!... mad science surfaces to seize the soiree with a sinister serum that shape-shifts this bubbly boogie into something so wicked, unsettling and monstrous that you'll wish your great grandparents had never shared that taxi. The details are a closely guarded government secret, but you'd better believe that this night is destined to kick off World War 3 through 8!

Ubisoft and SpectreVision present: TRANSFERENCE @ FANTASTIC FEST

09/22/2018 • Theater

Imagine an escape room set in a deranged mind. Transference™ brings a first-person exploration game into a chilling new dimension. Join us for an exclusive screening with commentary from a panel featuring Elijah Wood, Lisa Whalen, Josh Waller and Daniel Noah of SpectreVision, and Kevin Racapé and Benoit Richer of Ubisoft.

Transference™ is a collaboration between SpectreVision and Ubisoft Montreal, bridging the gap between movies and video games. You will be plunged into the experiment of a troubled scientist, a corrupted digital simulation of his family formed using their collective brain data. See their world from three perspectives of a family as we attempt to unravel the mystery hiding in this mind-bending psychological thriller.

LEONARD MALTIN BOOK SIGNING: HOOKED ON HOLLYWOOD

09/23/2018 • Highball

Leonard Maltin is America's best-known film historian, film reviewer, and author of books that have sold more than 7 million copies. In *Hooked on Hollywood*, Leonard opens up his personal archive to take readers on a fascinating journey through film history. Included are some of his early interviews with film greats conducted by a teenaged Leonard Maltin in the late 1960s, and later, more in-depth interviews conducted with filmmakers and stars of Hollywood's Golden Era — interviews that have never been published in book form. Also included in *Hooked on Hollywood* are featurettes — articles written by Leonard for his *Movie Crazy* newsletter about great films like *Casablanca* and the people who made them. What emerges is a fascinating, often hilarious journey through the soundstages and remote locations of Hollywood to see how the movies we now call "classic" were really made.

MALTIN ON MOVIES: (guest TBD)

09/23/2018 • Highball

SCRIPTS GONE WILD

09/23/2018 • Highball

The ocean has Jaws. The sky has the birds. The dirt has... well, GRABOIDS! Join *Scripts Gone Wild*, in all our Fantastic Fest glory, as we celebrate the brilliantly wonderful 1990 horror/adventure classic, *TREMORS*. It's got everything you want in a film: Kevin Bacon oozing his unique brand of charm, Fred Ward showing us new and exciting ways to use profanity, and Reba McEntire blasting a 90-gauge elephant gun. Did we mention it's a DRINKING GAME? The rules: Every time one of our readers flubs a line, forgets their place, gets distracted... THEY DRINK! *Scripts Gone Wild* is a script-reading series where we take a group of unsuspecting celebs, filmmakers, and influencers, put a script and alcohol in their hands, and see what happens! It's a riotous good time that benefits a righteous good cause. Also, since it's Fantastic Fest, we're going to have some INSANE surprises in store. We'll announce our cast as they confirm, but a lot of this madness isn't going to be unveiled until minutes before we get started. Just know you're in for one helluva ride!

PARTIES & EVENTS

CHAOS REIGNS! KARAOKE

09/23/2018 • Highball

Karaoke has been the beating, bleating heart of the festival's nightlife since its earliest days, and 14 years in, demented revelry and potential humiliation still represent one of our most sacred patented traditions. New and old, tall and short, all FF-ers are invited to shed their dignity in a communal vein-bulging effort to satiate the bloodthirsty Karaoke Gods. Tonight we LIVE FOREVER!!

MONDO CARD GAME PLAY: FIGHT CLUB & THE THING

09/24/2018 • Highball

This is your life and it's ending one minute at a time. As you become a slave to the retail nesting instinct, you have the desire to collect, gain and build your way to being truly complete. You are just one item away from total happiness. However, you must ignore that voice in your head telling you to fight it. It's telling you there's one place that you can go to feel reborn but you need to follow 8 rules and the first of which is to not talk about it! The Highball will be hosting an event where you can decide what side of your mind to believe. We will be helping people become truly complete or to finally hit bottom with an early look at Mondo Games new offering, Fight Club: The Home Game.

MALTIN ON MOVIES: (guest TBD)

09/24/2018 • Highball

FANTASTIC AWARDS

09/24/2018 • Highball

Each year, FF is electrified to showcase the works of genre visionaries and trailblazers from across the globe. A few of these groundbreaking features and shorts will be spotlighted tonight, as we raise a glass of champagne and/or a fist of solidarity in celebration of cinema, storytelling and the great lost art of having fun.

FANTASTIC FEUD

09/24/2018 • Theater

Our long-running vulgar display of geek knowledge pits the globe's greatest genre goons/scholars against each other in a galactic onslaught of mental agility, verbal hostility and full-tilt brutality. Filmmakers, journalists and various other movie megamasters collide in this no-holds-barred deathride of useless cinematic information and on-screen in(s)anity, all masterminded by Movie Moxie's tiny host Maxim Pozderac.

YOUTH PANEL: The Boat

09/25/2018 • Alamo Mueller

Now in our fourth year, the Fantastic Fest Youth Panel brings together guest filmmakers and programmers with over 100 high school film students and teachers from across Central Texas. The event is held at our Mueller location to protect the youngsters from the typical FF chaos. This time, students will be enjoying festival title THE BOAT, and will talk with the director and lead actor afterward.

MISKATONIC INSTITUTE: Ghouls to the Front - Rethinking Women's Horror Filmmaking

09/25/2018 • Theater

With instructor Alexandra Heller-Nicholas, presented by Kier-la Janisse! The Miskatonic Institute of Horror Studies is proud to present this special one-off class with film writer and scholar Alexandra Heller-Nicholas (Rape Revenge Films: A Critical Study) at Austin's Fantastic Fest.

While researching and writing her upcoming book 1000 Women in Horror, Australian film critic and author Heller-Nicholas was struck by the scope of women's horror filmmaking. That scope lead to some important – and sometimes difficult – questions: are horror films made by women necessarily “feminist”? What do we mean when we talk about “feminism” anyway? What can we learn from art history? Do women make different kinds of horror films than men and represent violence in different ways? And who has told us which women horror filmmakers matter – and, through their omission from popular memory, which ones don't? Looking at a range of examples from around the world from 1898 to 2018, Heller-Nicholas examines ways we can collectively rethink the history of horror more broadly to be more inclusive, more representative, and more fun.

VHS SWAP THING!

09/25/2018 • Highball

BUY! SELL! KILL! DIE!!!! Yep, you read that right: against all odds, VHS is alive and well in 2018, the most enduring format for home cinema entertainment and a science-free time machine to the glorious days of our collective past! PLUS!... almost half the movies released on VHS have never made it to DVD, Blu-ray OR streaming! So we're kicking off a major rager of VHS-slinging mayhem! Videomaniacx will be attending from all over the US! There'll be live VHS mixing on stage by The Voyager Institute! And thousands upon

PARTIES & EVENTS

THOUSANDS of fully functional escapism rectangles to dazzle our puny branez! Presented by Video Vortex, End Of An Ear Records and VHStival!

DINNER FEAST AT COMMUNITY FIRST

09/25/2018 • Community First

Fantastic Fest will present a singular, open-air screening experience of *BORDER* in an intimate outdoor venue, paired with exclusive cocktails and accompanied by a lavish multi-course meal crafted and prepared by Executive Chef Brad Sorenson.

NERD RAP

09/25/2018 • Highball

All Poindexters and geekbeat freakz, report to the dance floor!! From the early nerdcore albums of MC Frontalot to the Epic Rap Battles of History and the entire careers of the Lonely Island guys and Childish Gambino, rapping nerds have become undeniable icons of pop culture. Now it's your turn to show us what you've got, in the eighth annual Fantastic Fest Nerd Rap Throwdown! What is Nerd Rap? Simply put, it's any hip hop beat paired with an emcee (or multiple microphone fiends) rapping about movies, gaming, comics or any other faction of nerd culture. Got what it takes to become a Geek God of the Mic?

100 BEST VEHI-KILLS!

09/25/2018 • Theater

The triumphant return of Fantastic Fest's most idiotic tradition: 100 Best Kills! This year's theme is man vs. machine. Spoiler: MACHINES WIN! I mean, they're made of metal and they don't care when you cut them! Nevertheless, humans continually insist on proving their soft-shelled inferiority, and we've got the clips to prove it! We're revving up a rampaging roster of cars, trucks, boats, airplanes, helicopters, rockets, tractors and major construction vehicles, all with an unquenchable thirst for total annihilation! NOTE: All clips in this show are from narrative films. No actual tragedy. We may be stupid, but we're not stupid!

PUKE AND EXPLODE!!!

09/26/2018 • Highball

The human body is a shameful, disgusting hellscape. And it requires FUEL! So each year we invite a few of FF's most iron-intestined warriors on the Highball stage to participate in a pulse-pounding competitive 8-course daredevil ride through the average citizen's culinary nightmare zones. Each of these edible impossibilities will be designed and executed by Alamo Executive Chef Brad Sorenson,

who guarantees that they are all medically safe for consumption, and no one has died yet. So sign up and take your guts on a rampaging exploration of the darkest dietary domains!!

MOVIE MOXIE

09/26/2018 • Highball

Ever watch the Fantastic Feud and think to yourself, "I can do that!" Now's your chance to prove it! Bring your team of no more than six film trivia brainiacs to The Highball to face six rounds of motion picture questions from host Movie Moxie and co-host Nicky Moxie. Then, members of the top-scoring teams will be brought onstage to participate in the Audio/Videodrome round! Fun will be had, egos will be inflated and/or crushed, newly-learned obscure facts will be quickly forgotten, and there will be prizes throughout for those who prove their Movie Moxie™.

K-POP DANCE PARTY

09/26/2018 • Highball

New to Fantastic Fest by popular demand and created by two veterans of Austin's electronic music scene for over 8 years, Demographics Entertainment has hosted events at a number of Austin's most recognizable downtown venues. Their flagship show "I HEART KPOPI!" (it refers to Korean pop music) dedicates the entire night to mixing the music videos that come from halfway around the world. In the five years since it started, the monthly event has established a large community that has been praised for their positive vibe, and in 2018 The Austin Chronicle called it "one of the most diverse gatherings one can experience in Austin." All the boogie you can take, all the booties gonna shake.

DOUG BENSON MOVIE INTERRUPTION (film TBD)

09/26/2018 • Theater

Once again, America's least straightedge comedian joins a hand-picked squadron of beloved wise-asses to respectfully butcher the movies that we love most. As the film plays in full, Benson and company enhance/verbally abuse it, turning perennial classics into knee-slappin' slaughterhouses of no-rules hilarity.

CLOSING NIGHT PARTY

09/27/2018 • Offsite



FIGHT CLUB

THE HOME GAME

Assume the role of The Narrator or Tyler Durden as you play a game of psychological tug-of-war within Jack's fractured psyche.

Hit bottom or attain completeness, either way... *you have to fight.*

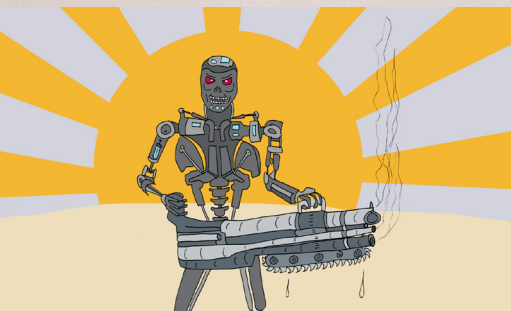
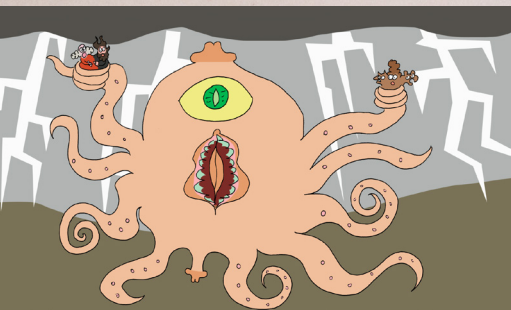


**HITTING
THIS FALL!**

**MONDO
GAMES**

TENACIOUS D

POST-APOCALYPTO



Post-Apocalypso is an original, six-part animated video series from the minds of rock duo Tenacious D, comprised of Jack Black and Kyle Gass. Each frame of every episode was hand-drawn by Jack himself, with every character voiced by Black and Gass, and can be watched via Tenacious D's YouTube page.

All six episodes feature new Tenacious D songs, culminating in a new Tenacious D album of the same name.

True to the title, Post-Apocalypso finds Tenacious D thrust into a world of complete and utter destruction following the drop of an atomic bomb. Surviving the attack in classic cinematic fashion (a good old imperishable 1950's refrigerator), the duo quickly learns that new forms of evil have spawned from the blast. One thing becomes apparent—for humanity to prevail, Tenacious D must save the world.

WRITERS: TENACIOUS D

DIRECTORS: TENACIOUS D

PRODUCERS: TENACIOUS D

CAST (VOICE): TENACIOUS D

ART: JACK BLACK

COLORIST: MICHAEL MOLINA

EDITOR: JOHN SPIKER





BLOOD LAKE



DRUG STORIES!



I WAS A TEENAGE SERIAL KILLER



MARY JANE'S NOT A VIRGIN ANYMORE

BLOOD LAKE

PRESENTED BY AGFA AND BLEEDING SKULL • 1987 • DIR: TIM BOGGS • 82 MIN

What if Robert Altman made a shot-on-video slasher instead of NASHVILLE? Wonder no more!

BLOOD LAKE is the most fascinating — and stupefying — horror movie that ever escaped from 1987. Like SLEDGEHAMMER before it, this movie documents a group of unhinged party animals as they embark on a weekend trip filled with Jet Skis, a keg of Busch, and an extended game of quarters. But look out! There's a supernatural killer on the loose who wears cowboy boots and a silk shirt with a rose stitched on it! The motive for the gory killings? Real estate debt. Yes, you read that right: people are being murdered because someone has anxiety about their unpaid bills. And then there's Lil' Tony, played by Travis Krasser. Lil' Tony is an adolescent horn-dog with a 12" mullet. Whenever he speaks ("I

choose you as my sex partner!"), you'll wish you were smoking weed on a paddle boat with him, just like in the movie!

Made by real-life friends from Oklahoma on a real-life vacation, BLOOD LAKE is a rewardingly lethal collision of '80s slasher video-vomit and twisted cinéma vérité madness. From false metal soundtrack hits like "Thru-Out The Nite" and "Was It Real" to gratuitous scenes of people sleeping, this might be the only movie in history capable of receiving a stamp of approval from both David Lee Roth and Andy Warhol.

Undoubtedly, you will have questions after (maybe) surviving the trip to BLOOD LAKE. You're in luck! At this screening, Doug Barry, the producer-writer-star of the movie, will join us in person for a Q&A! (JOSEPH A. ZIEMBA)

The American Genre Film Archive (AGFA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit located in Austin, Texas. AGFA exists to preserve the legacy of genre movies through collection, conservation, and distribution.

DRUG STORIES! NARCOTIC NIGHTMARES AND HALLUCINOGENIC HELLRIDES, FEATURING THE TRIP BACK

PRESENTED BY AGFA AND SOMETHING WEIRD • 2018 • 80 MIN

AGFA and Something Weird scoured the Something Weird vaults to rescue and restore 16mm gems from a neglected genre: the classroom drug scare film. From doped-up drag-racers to spiders on speed, the best of the bunch are collected and presented in DRUG STORIES!

What's the best way to prevent young people from turning on, tuning in, and dropping out? Government entities of the '60s and '70s seemed to believe that hardline DRAGNET-style narration, groovy medical animation, and dramatic reenactments of bad trips would do the job. Of course, when the old tricks didn't work, filmmakers had to get more creative. Maybe a small child could better relate the cold, hard facts about dope? And maybe the dangers of hallucinogens could be explained by a sentient tab of LSD?

But they didn't have to overthink it. Sometimes all you need is a middle-aged woman berating kids into submission.

In THE TRIP BACK, the crown jewel of this collection, Florrie Fisher recounts over two decades of drug use, prostitution, and imprisonment to unimpressed New York City teens. Fisher looks like your aunt but talks like a guttersnipe ("I turned him into a ten cent pimp!"), and if you happen to challenge her, watch out! She's dramatic, hyperbolic, and irrationally defensive! Amy Sedaris' character of Jerri Blank on the TV sitcom STRANGERS WITH CANDY was directly inspired by Fisher's frosted flip hairdo and sordid history, and the similarities are uncanny.

AGFA and Something Weird are thrilled to present 2K preservatons of these bad trips, bummers, freak-outs and flip-outs, all from original 16mm prints that were inflicted upon children across the country. (ALICIA COOMBS)

Please see website or webapp for icon assignments for AGFA Presents

MOVIE ICONS

I WAS A TEENAGE SERIAL KILLER + MARY JANE'S NOT A VIRGIN ANYMORE

PRESENTED BY AGFA • 1993 / 1997 • DIR: SARAH JACOBSON • 27 / 98 MIN

Inspired by underground cinema, indie record labels and 'zine culture, Sarah Jacobson was a one-woman powerhouse of independent filmmaking in the 1990s. Taking on every major function from production through distribution, Jacobson operated with a fuck-you, can-do attitude that shone through her work onscreen and beyond.

The 27-minute short I WAS A TEENAGE SERIAL KILLER was produced with the encouragement of filmmaker George Kuchar, Jacobson's instructor at San Francisco Institute of the Arts. Like SLACKER meets Valerie Solanas, the film depicts a 19-year-old woman who responds to catcalls, condescension and bad sex the only way she knows how: murder.

MARY JANE'S NOT A VIRGIN ANYMORE, Jacobson's only feature film, is a vibrant and vital antidote to every phony Hollywood teen picture, bringing lo-fi realism to the coming-of-age genre. Sure, the usual signposts

are here — first job, first time, crushes, friendships, fitting in and figuring it out — but all are handled with utter honesty. The sex is bad, the boys are jerks, the future is questionable, and growing up is ultimately a disappointment. It's a stark contrast to Hollywood's glamorous lies.

Jacobson's work stands in opposition to what she dubbed "Indiewood," the '90s era of movies that claimed independence while playing it safe. In her short life, Sarah Jacobson proved herself as a shitkicker and rule breaker, finding fans in Allison Anders, Tamra Davis, and Kim Gordon. These films stand as a testament to the vision, grit, determination, and raw talent of the Queen of Underground Cinema.

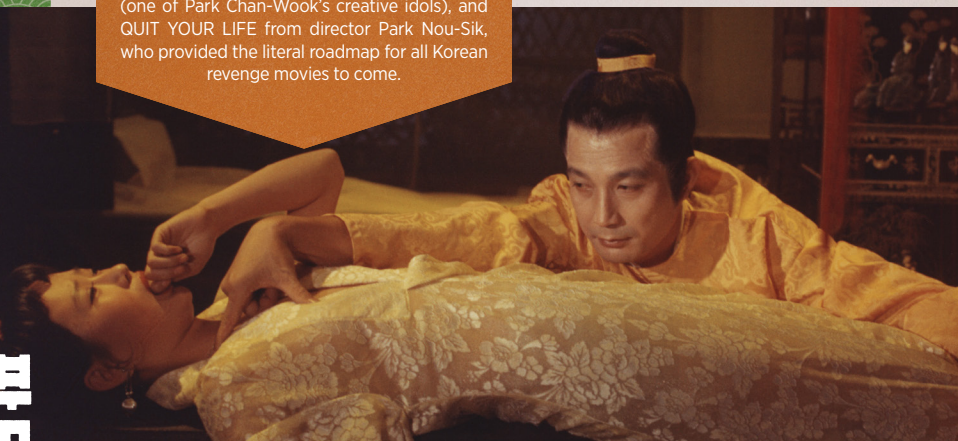
AGFA is thrilled to present new 2K preservatons from the only existing film elements of these cinematic beacons of girl culture. (ALICIA COOMBS)

Fantastic Fest turns its eye to South Korea and explores the Korean Quota Quickies, a period in the 1970s which saw filmmaking flourish despite stifling ideological censorship, thanks to a quota system which required a strict number of local productions be made for each of the foreign films imported. Though most of these were rushed productions, clever directors used the system to their advantage to sneak strange and daring content past producers and censors. Fantastic Fest is going to present two very rarely seen films from the period: **BAN GEUM-RYEON** from director Kim Ki-Young (one of Park Chan-Wook's creative idols), and **QUIT YOUR LIFE** from director Park Nou-Sik, who provided the literal roadmap for all Korean revenge movies to come.

판타스틱영화제

KOREA'S QUOTA QUICKIES

판타스틱영화제



BAN GEUM-RYEON

1981 • DIR: KIM KI-YOUNG • 90 MIN

Very loosely based on a famous Chinese tale, Kim Ki-young's work chronicles the movements and misdeeds of Ban Geum-ryeon, a woman withering away in a marriage to an older man. Her fate changes when the already married Moon-kyung wins a mahjong bet which nets him another man's fortune and ten wives, with Geum-ryeon thrown in to boot. Moon-kyung is quickly infatuated with the sensual Geum-ryeon, but with many other women in the household vying for his affections, it isn't long until the manor runs crimson.

Known for all-time Korean classics *THE HOUSEMAID*, *THE INSECT WOMAN* and *IEOH ISLAND*, Kim took his biggest gamble when the big-budget *BAN GEUM-RYEON* went into production in the mid-1970s. After years of on-and-off filming and several more battling censors, the film was finally revealed in 1981, albeit with 40 minutes shorn by overzealous government censors. With Kim's original version lost forever, we can now only show the 95-minute cut of *BAN GEUM-RYEON*. We're not sure which scenes

are missing (though they leave some leaps of logic in their wake), but considering what does remain, we wonder exactly how far a director would need to go to upset a 1980s Korean censor. As things stand, we have cats murdering babies and some good old-fashioned dungeon torture.

Kim employs resplendent sets throughout, full of deep primary colors and dark shadows, but what makes the film really pop is his visual signature. *BAN GEUM-RYEON* boasts extraordinary framing, with a roving camera that snakes left and right and juts in and out, spying carefully placed details in the mise-en-scène, and noting the meticulous blocking as characters are juxtaposed to accentuate the gorgeous, terrifying, or hilarious pieces of Kim's unique period psychological puzzle. Come discover the work of the man that turned Park Chan-wook into a fanboy during this ultra-rare screening, in a beautiful 35mm print to boot! (PIERCE CONRAN)

Please see website or webapp for icon assignments for Korea's Quota Quickies

MOVIE ICONS



QUIT YOUR LIFE

1971 • DIR: PARK NOU-SIK • 82 MIN

With his gravelly voice booming through the screen, lead actor/writer/director Park Nou-sik, a veteran of no less than 900 feature length films, debuted behind the camera in 1971 the only way he knew how to, by barreling forward with brawn and passion and never looking back. Presented for only the second time outside of Korea and for the first time in English, Fantastic Fest has dug up the Korean action gem QUIT YOUR LIFE, a breathless tale of pulpy panache, broiling machismo and the cold, harsh tears of revenge.

A seaside tryst is interrupted when a rope smashes through a car window, setting off a brutal cycle of retribution. The roots of violence date back to the Japanese Colonial Occupation of Korea, when Jeong-su and Cheol-ho engaged in back-breaking work at a mine in Manchuria. There, the nefarious Dal-gyu hatched a plan that saw Jeong-su falsely blamed for stealing gold and sentenced to

death at the end of a rope. Later, Cheol-ho returns to Korea where he seeks out Jeong-su's wife, who has become blind since her husband's departure. Unable to tell her the truth, he poses as Jeong-su and thus begins to hatch his plan against the now powerful tycoon Dal-gyu, which includes knocking off his cohorts and seducing his daughter, armed only with his noose, wits, and burly charm.

Sneering in the face of subtlety, Park's film emphasizes momentum and melodrama as it seeks to redress the wounds of the past. Long before it was in vogue to do so in Korean films (think THE AGE OF SHADOWS or ASSASSINATION), he mined the pain of the Colonial Era time and again in his films, such as DEVIL! TAKE THE TRAIN TO HELL. Full of psycho-sexual torment and emotional excess, QUIT YOUR LIFE provides a road map to the modern Korean revenge drama. Come discover it for yourself for the very first time in North America! (PIERCE CONRAN)

SUPPORTING PARTNERS OF KOREA'S QUOTA QUICKIES



HI-YAH! is your new favorite martial arts and action movie channel, from your friends at Well Go USA. It's the sound of mayhem, of flying fists and roundhouse kicks, ninja stars and fighting sticks. Featuring hundreds of hours of programming refreshed monthly including your favorites from Johnnie To, John Woo, Wilson Yip, Tsui Hark, Jian Wen, Yuen Woo-Ping and more.



The Korean Film Archive (KOFA) is the sole film archive in South Korea with nationwide coverage. KOFA's main duties are to collect, preserve and categorize films and film-related materials, as well as to foster accessibility to its collections. It also operates the most reliable online database of Korean films, as well as an online film streaming service.



HALLOWEEN

2018 • DIR: DAVID GORDON GREEN • 105 MIN • USA

Universal Pictures will release Trancas International Films, Blumhouse Productions and Miramax's HALLOWEEN on Friday, October 19, 2018.

Jamie Lee Curtis returns to her iconic role as Laurie Strode, who comes to her final confrontation with Michael Myers, the masked figure who has haunted her since she narrowly escaped his killing spree on Halloween night four decades ago.

HALLOWEEN is also produced by Malek Akkad, whose Trancas International Films has produced the HALLOWEEN series since its inception, and Bill Block (ELYSIUM, DISTRICT 9). In addition to Carpenter and Curtis, Green and McBride will executive produce under their Rough House Pictures banner. Ryan Freimman also serves in that role.

HALLOWEEN will be distributed worldwide by Universal Pictures. www.HalloweenMovie.com

Master of horror John Carpenter executive produces and serves as creative consultant on this film, joining forces with cinema's current leading producer of horror, Jason Blum (GET OUT, SPLIT, THE PURGE, PARANORMAL ACTIVITY). Inspired by Carpenter's classic, filmmakers David Gordon Green and Danny McBride crafted a story that carves a new path from the events in the landmark 1978 film, and Green also directs.



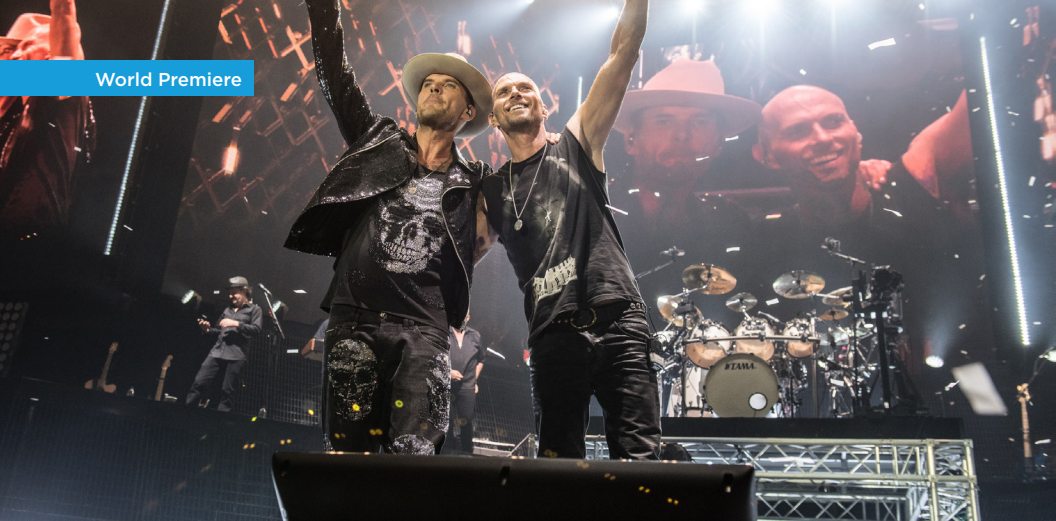


BAD TIMES AT THE EL ROYALE

2018 • DIR: DREW GODDARD • TBD MIN • USA

Seven strangers, each with a secret to bury, meet at Lake Tahoe's El Royale, a rundown hotel with a dark past. Over the course of one fateful night, everyone will have a last shot at redemption... before everything goes to hell. Jeff Bridges, Chris Hemsworth, Jon Hamm, Dakota Johnson and Cynthia Erivo lead an all-star cast in BAD TIMES AT THE EL ROYALE.





AFTER THE SCREAMING STOPS

2018 • DIR: JOE PEARLMAN & DAVID SOUTAR • 97 MIN • UNITED KINGDOM

Bros — one of the biggest English bands of the 1980s — was the classic pop star story: A meteoric rise with a #1 album that sold over 10 million copies followed by packed stadium tours, and then by their decline amid disagreements, arguments, and fractured relationships.

Now over twenty years later, Luke and Matt Goss agree to reunite for a very special gig at the O2 in London. But first they have to contend with each other, their past, the issues that drove them apart in the first place, and much more.

AFTER THE SCREAMING STOPS is the kind of pop band documentary that bends the genre in such a way that it's impossible not to take notice, whether you were a fan of the band or not. At its center are two charismatic and diametrically opposed brothers, Matt and Luke Goss. Both men have forged well-earned careers after the band dissolved, and are in turns charming, funny, ridiculous, and heartfelt.

It's their unique charisma that gives the film a momentum that others of its ilk lack. Their reunion after so many years, their philosophies on life, and the story of Bros are perhaps the most fascinating pop story never told.

Don't worry if you've never heard of Bros. There's never been a band quite like them, and this film is your opportunity to experience the brothers at their best. Hear their stories, their outrageous philosophies, and the very human experiences they put on the screen, no-holds-barred, and emerge from the film a newly declared fan. (EVRIM ERSOY)





ALL THE GODS IN THE SKY

2018 • DIR: QUARXX • 98 MIN • FRANCE

ALL THE GODS IN THE SKY is the feature length version of Quarxx's short film A NEARLY PERFECT BLUE SKY, which was selected at Sundance in 2017 and garnered awards all over the world. It's also his first feature film, and it sets its sights on establishing him as a solid player in the genre film industry.

While working on a La Reunion photo report in 2012, Quarxx stumbled upon a scene that became the inspiration for the film: a brother who had been lying next to his dead sister for three weeks. While not the subject of the film, the devotion and implied remorse of that image is the emotional core that Quarxx explores. Beginning with an opening scene that will both shock and baffle, the director takes us on a journey of a man plagued by guilt and slowly losing his grip on reality.

Convinced that he was abducted by aliens in his childhood, Simon is waiting for the day they will return to release him and his sister Estelle from their suffering. His behavior

starts to worry his coworkers at the factory, resulting in his demotion, but he never stops caring for Estelle. While his methods may be questioned, he dearly loves his sister whose physical state is the consequence of a stupid game they played as children.

With her very peculiar physique due to a rare genetic disorder, model Melanie Gaydos — making her film debut — is fantastic despite being immobile for most of the film. Quarxx searched for two years to find just the right actress, a testament to his perfectionism. The production design and the cinematography are equally amazing, and the film is produced by FF alum François Cognard (AMER; LET THE CORPSES TAN), a man who has a sharp eye for talent.

With imagery that will blow your mind, mixing science fiction and drama, ALL THE GODS IN THE SKY is a dark tale of brotherly love, paranoia, and the burden of responsibility that will unsettle and surprise you on many levels. (ANNICK MAHNERT)





THE ANGEL

2018 • DIR: LUIS ORTEGA • 120 MIN • ARGENTINA, SPAIN

Luis Ortega's aesthetically stunning tale of Carlitos' crimes marries violent underworld drama with a tense character study, underlining the homoerotic subtext that is the crux of the relationship between its central characters. From the first brutal encounter between Carlitos and his schoolmate Ramon, sparks are flying. As Carlitos finds himself integrated into Ramon's working class criminal family, he embarks on a journey of self-discovery and felonies.

Borrowing liberally from producer Pedro Almodóvar's palette, Ortega contrasts the violent realism of an Argentina under a dictatorship with the fantasy world of Carlitos, a place where dance, music, and lust rule supreme. Thus a television contest becomes a music video fantasy sequence, and all the crimes are punctuated by flights of fancy.

The central performance by Lorenzo Ferro delves into our fascination with violent, charismatic figures. His Carlos is the pinnacle of a middle-class boy — handsome, well-spoken, typical — whose psychopathic

tendencies and lack of a moral compass create a dimension of uncertainty which threatens to spill into violence at any given moment. His moral detachment infects the very fabric of the film, imbuing all the crimes with a dark hilarity that's as brilliant as it is disturbing.

Subversive, astute, and as enjoyable as they come, THE ANGEL is a whirlwind ride of crime, passion and dark humor. It's an unblinking look at a criminal whose psychology we may not quite understand, but whose electric charm entralls us as much as it does his victims. (EVRIM ERSOY)



APOSTLE

2018 • DIR: GARETH EVANS • 129 MIN • UNITED KINGDOM

Thomas may hate his father, but his love for his sister Jennifer has never wavered. Upon learning that she's been kidnapped for ransom, Thomas finally returns home to face his father. Finding him too broken to handle the situation, he makes his way to the remote island of Erisden. The island is home to a mysterious cult that worships "the Goddess" of the land who speaks to them through Her chosen prophet, Malcolm. But before boarding the boat, Thomas switches his ticket with another man: an instinctive move that allows him to arrive undetected and stay in hiding.

Upon arrival in Erisden, Thomas finds a pseudo-socialist society, a place that supposedly advocates freedom and equality, with no currency and shared work. But as with all communities, it's poisoned by the all-too-human instincts of greed, envy, and lust for power, failings that are spreading like a cancer. It's that very cancer that makes Erisden such a dangerous place and threatens its very existence. While Thomas carefully searches this cesspool for his sister, Malcolm and his cohorts search for Thomas in a tantalizing cat and mouse game with devastating consequences.

The name Gareth Evans should be well known to our Fantastic Fest audience by now. The master writer, director and editor behind such titles as MERANTAU, THE RAID, and THE RAID 2, as well as a particularly relevant segment from V/H/S/2, is back with his latest, working in English for the first time since his debut film. The cinematography by Matt Flannery is simply gorgeous and the attention to detail in the Edwardian period production design is incredible, allowing the audience to believe what they see and lose themselves in the story. Evans shows a steady hand and a clear aptitude for more than just amazing action sequences, but don't worry — the film has its fair share of action, with Evans' trademark style and shocking brutality. Featuring powerhouse performances from Dan Stevens and Michael Sheen and an intriguing score by Fajar Yuskemal and Aria Prayogi, APOSTLE is an enigmatic and riveting tour de force, a visceral shock to the senses that will knock you on your ass. (LUKE MULLEN)





THE BASTARDS' FIG TREE

2017 • DIR: ANA MURUGARREN • 103 MIN • SPAIN

In *THE BASTARDS' FIG TREE*, Rogelio, a powerful fascist soldier in the Spanish Civil War, ruthlessly hunts down and eliminates Spaniards who dare to go against the new regime. One night, when capturing a man for execution, he locks eyes with the man's ten-year-old son and is overcome with terror and guilt. He becomes convinced this boy will track him down and kill him once he reaches the age of sixteen.

This moment breaks Rogelio's resolve. Convinced that he must make amends for his crimes, he moves to a small shack in the countryside near his father's gravesite, and becomes a hermit and devout Falangist — a "Soldier of God" in his own words. A fig tree blossoms on his father's grave, the success and growth of which soon absorb his focus. Each time he feels his guilt returning, he channels more attention into the tree, losing a piece of his former self with every new branch that grows. At first, his friends and family try to convince him to return to his old life, but soon this Soldier of God becomes a figure of worship in his own right.

Prolific Spanish actor Karra Elejalde (*ACCIÓN MUTANTE*; *TIMECRIMES*) infuses Rogelio with a complex mix of darkness, sympathy, and quirkiness. Though he begins his role buttoned up and cruel, he eventually proves himself capable of an incredibly warm, humorous, and farcical performance.

Much like *PAN'S LABYRINTH* before it, *THE BASTARDS' FIG TREE* provides a fresh, magical exploration of the horrors of the Spanish Civil War, showing both the brutality of war and its ability to inspire hope and change in a broken society. It's astounding to realize this is only Murugarren's second time directing a feature film. Her work has a clear voice that shifts between fantasy, comedy, and drama with great ease.

With its dry humor, sharp political and religious satire, and lushly filmed magical realism, *THE BASTARDS' FIG TREE* is a unique and absorbing film you won't want to miss. (LOGAN TAYLOR)





BETWEEN WORLDS

2018 • DIR: MARIA PULERA • 90 MIN • USA

Fantastic Fest doesn't shy away from the strange and unusual. In fact, we love to embrace cinema that so defies all tradition and expectations that audiences are left with their jaws on the floor. Now, take that jaw-dropping film and add the words "Nicolas" and "Cage," and Maria Pulera's second feature takes its unconventional narrative to heights that few other films can aspire to.

Cage plays Joe, a down-on-his-luck trucker haunted by the recent deaths of his wife and daughter. Joe seemingly rescues Julie (Franke Potente) at a truck stop, but she reveals that he has actually interfered in her saving her injured daughter. Julie, it turns out, has the ability to send her spirit between this world and the next, and Joe stopped her from finding her daughter's spirit and guiding it back. As Julie's daughter slips into a coma, she and Joe comfort each other in ways that don't exactly sit well with Joe's dead wife, Mary. When Julie again tries to help her daughter by entering the spirit world, Mary takes the opportunity to come back from the other side and settle a few scores with her husband.

Trust me when I say I haven't outlined even half the insanity that's unleashed in BETWEEN WORLDS, and whatever praise I give to Cage and the rest of the cast isn't enough to actually encompass what they bring to this film. Everyone follows Cage's lead and goes full-tilt, giving Pulera's unique movie a once-in-a-lifetime feel. We all know Cage is a fearless actor who isn't afraid to take the chances we rarely see with other commercially successful performers. From LEAVING LAS VEGAS to BAD LIEUTENANT to MANDY, Cage has given it all and then some. That said, BETWEEN WORLDS is Cage beyond anything we've seen before. (JAMES EMANUEL SHAPIRO)





THE BLOOD OF WOLVES

2018 • DIR: KAZUYA SHIRAISHI • 126 MIN • JAPAN

Director Kazuya Shiraishi's loose homage to Kinji Fukasaku's *BATTLES WITHOUT HONOR AND HUMANITY* is the kind of cops vs. yakuza flick that has been long lacking in current Japanese cinema. Full of tough-as-nails characters and doused in wall-to-wall violence, this brilliant creation is sure to please lovers of the genre. Based on the book by Yûko Yuzuki, *THE BLOOD OF WOLVES* is an assault on the senses elevated by amazing performances.

Ogami Shogo is an old hand at police work on the streets of Hiroshima. Tougher than tough, his unorthodox methods ensure a fragile balance between the different yakuza gangs vying for control of the city. When he's unexpectedly partnered with newcomer Hioka Shuichi, Ogami is less than pleased. However, a rapport slowly develops in these two opposing characters as they follow the thread of a routine disappearance case which hides more secrets than either of them can imagine. As the heat rises and the gangs start howling for blood, the two detectives are the only thing standing in the way of Hiroshima's streets drowning in blood.

Starring Kôji Yakusho as the rogue cop Ogami, *THE BLOOD OF WOLVES* is at once a tribute and re-invention of the classic yakuza film. Smart casting of some of the most prolific Japanese actors in side roles gives the film a well-established lived-in feeling, while the gorgeous cinematography draws every inch of atmosphere from Hiroshima. When the violence comes, it's sharp and brutal, and the danger that these men face is visceral thanks to great action sequences.

Proving that there's still life left in the genre, Kazuya Shiraishi delivers one of the most explosive titles at Fantastic Fest, a full-blown vicious attack on the senses that will remind you the power of the big screen. (EVRIM ERSOY)





BLOODLINE

2018 • DIR: HENRY JACOBSON • 95 MIN • USA

Seann William Scott (GOON; AMERICAN PIE) goes full psychopath in BLOODLINE, the latest thriller from Blumhouse Productions and director Henry Jacobson. Evan Cole has a seemingly perfect life: a loving wife, a healthy baby boy, and a meaningful job as a social worker for troubled teens. But Evan has a secret — he violently tortures and kills those who lack his wholesome family values, specifically the family members causing problems for his patients. He hides his compulsion from his wife and son, but concealing his true nature from his overbearing, ever-present mother is harder.

For a while, things work out quite conveniently for Evan. A sleek white mansion sits empty and available for Evan's murderous rendezvous, his students' problematic family members make themselves easily accessible and readily disposable, and his wife exhibits unending patience for his recurring late-night drives, never questioning her husband's actions...until an observant detective catches a pattern in the killings that leads him to Evan's doorstep.

While a relatively simple concept on the surface, the film is elevated by heightened stylistic flourishes. Colorful lighting mirrors shifting moods, murderous close-ups from the killer's perspective echo giallo thrillers, and a pulsating synth score drives every crucial scene. All of this combined with a clever script functioning within its own surreal logic creates a melodramatic spectacle that is juicy, absorbing, twist-filled fun from the very first scene.

Seann William Scott is clearly having a blast playing against type in this role, maintaining a careful balance between buttoned up family man and deranged serial killer. There's also no shortage of arterial splatter and shocking violence in this moody, entertaining, and meticulously crafted thriller about the lengths some people will go to in order to protect their families. (LOGAN TAYLOR)





THE BOAT

2018 • DIR: WINSTON AZZOPARDI • 89 MIN • MALTA, UNITED KINGDOM

An unnamed fisherman sets out on his daily run but finds himself irredeemably lost when a thick fog suddenly surrounds his boat. However, it is when he crashes into an abandoned sailboat that his troubles really begin. Trapped onboard, he is forced to face an unknown enemy whose sole *raison d'être* seems to be the fisherman's destruction.

Building on a tradition of eerie, ghostly British tales, *THE BOAT* is a menacing thrill ride that pits a violent survival drama against the supernatural. In the leading role, Joe Azzopardi excels as the fisherman, a practical man whose quick thinking and sea-faring experience ensure that his fight against the unnatural force is more than even.

It would be churlish to not mention the role the brilliant cinematography plays in a film that relies on its setting to keep the mood sustained. Winston Azzopardi captures the sea in a duality that is immediately logical. While calm, serene and beautiful, it is also more than capable of turning into a monster

ready to devour those who are not prepared. Scenes of storm and chaos are handled with aplomb, relying on practical effects and visual trickery as opposed to endless CGI, drawing the audience further into its world.

A B-movie in the best sense of the phrase, *THE BOAT* is a brilliant thriller that cleverly highlights the natural in the supernatural. Facing that most unforgiving and vicious enemy, Nature, the fisherman needs to keep his wits in order to survive. But the mysterious boat and the force that drives it add a superlative genre element to a film that will leave those who see it breathless, entertained, and convinced of the arrival of a new filmmaking duo whose next step they'll want to watch very carefully. (EVRIM ERSOY)





BORDER

2018 • DIR: ALI ABBASI • 108 MIN • SWEDEN, DENMARK

Every year, Fantastic Fest is privileged to present a film which can only be described as the genre discovery of the year. HEREDITARY looked to be this year's big splash, but Sundance debuted it January — and opened the film to great success this summer — preventing it from being featured in this year's lineup. That's okay though, because we have something that'll equally knock the festival crowd through the back of the theater.

BORDER had pinged on our radar a bit before Cannes, and we were intrigued when it was selected to play in their Un Certain Regard section. Once we read the logline, it went immediately to the top of our must-see lists. After watching it (and in some cases, watching it again!), it was apparent that 2018 was going to have two major genre discoveries, and this one we absolutely had to bring to our audiences.

Honestly, the less I say about BORDER, the better. Its wonders, twists, and highs are best experienced going in completely blind. But don't let the lack of details deter you; this film is going to explode out of the fall festival circuit. The comparisons to LET THE

RIGHT ONE IN are inevitable — in no small part because both films share a screenwriter, as well as an author (John Ajvide Lindqvist wrote the short story BORDER is based on, and the novel that was adapted into LET THE RIGHT ONE IN) — but knowing fans won't dismiss the comparison as wishful hyperbole.

IT FOLLOWS, THE WITCH, GOODNIGHT MOMMY...almost every year there is one film that crosses over and takes both genre fans and mainstream cinema by storm. These features get their start at festivals like Cannes and Sundance and are amplified by Fantastic Fest. HEREDITARY was that film for the first half of 2018. For the second half of 2018, that film is Ali Abbasi's incredible BORDER. Don't miss it. (JAMES EMANUEL SHAPIRO)





BURNING

2018 • DIR: LEE CHANG-DONG • 148 MIN • SOUTH KOREA

Each year at Cannes, Screen International gathers a collection of critics from all over the world and asks them to grade every film in competition. They average the scores together and publish what's known as the "Critics Grid" so their readers can get an idea of what favorites are emerging for the Palme d'Or.

This year, Lee Chang-dong's BURNING scored the highest ever in the history of Screen International's Critics Grid with a score of 3.8 out of 4. Even though the jury gave the Palme to master filmmaker Hirokazu Kore-eda for his film SHOPLIFTERS, the mark that BURNING had left on the festival and the audience was profound.

Based on Haruki Murakami's short story, BURNING follows struggling writer Lee (Yoo Ah-in) as he becomes fascinated by former classmate Haemi (first-timer Jeon Jong-seo). When she travels to Africa, Lee watches her cat and is taken aback when Haemi returns with a new suitor, Ben (Steven Yeung

from THE WALKING DEAD). Ben's rich and privileged, aloof and unemotional. "He's the Great Gatsby," Lee warns Haemi, and he's right. But Ben isn't driving a wedge between Haemi and Lee so much as Haemi is building a link between the two men, so by the time Lee Chang-dong reveals what the film's true intentions are, the audience is as obsessed with Ben as Lee is.

BURNING may not have won Cannes, but it won Cannes over. Lee Chang-dong's psychological thriller is one of the best in world genre cinema this year and one of the must-see titles at Fantastic Fest. (JAMES EMANUEL SHAPIRO)





CAM

2018 • DIR: DANIEL GOLDHABER • 94 MIN • USA

Daniel Goldhaber's feature debut, *CAM*, is the kind of twisty, sexy, enigma of a movie we love to screen at Fantastic Fest. The film stars the revelatory Madeline Brewer (*ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK*; *THE HANDMAID'S TALE*) as Alice, a rising young star in webcam pornography. Alice wants nothing more than to break the top ten ranking of camgirls in her network, concocting outrageous and original narratives for each of her live shows to slowly climb in popularity and prestige. But Alice has three rules: she doesn't do public shows, she doesn't fake her orgasms, and she doesn't mislead her "Johns" with promises of love or in-person affection. Instead, she succeeds through sheer willpower and infectious optimism.

It's impossible not to be charmed by Alice, who despite her risqué career path maintains an innocent worldview, close relationship with her mother and younger brother, and supportive network of camgirl friends. She's effervescent and warm and full of ambition — sex work simply seems like the easiest way to break away from the the small-town fate those around her have succumbed to. But one day, Alice wakes to find another girl who looks just like her has commandeered her cam channel and username, and this girl has

no rules or boundaries. Alice wants nothing more than to take back her page and her life before it's too late to save either.

What follows is a neon-soaked thrillride complete with mistaken identities, cyberstalkers, and web-based psychological warfare. Goldhaber's debut combines kinetic visual style, a pounding techno score, and an unfaltering performance by Brewer to make *CAM* an unforgettable journey into the depths of the modern-day sex industry. Even more importantly, Goldhaber and screenwriter Isa Mazzei (the latter drawing from her own experience in the camming industry) upend any preconceived notions audiences may have about women in the sex industry, allowing us a sympathetic view of an oft-maligned community. Don't swipe left on this provocative, female-driven tale of digital-age madness sure to be talked about long after the credits roll. (LOGAN TAYLOR)





CHAINED FOR LIFE

2018 • DIR: AARON SCHIMBERG • 91 MIN • USA

In CHAINED FOR LIFE's movie-within-a-movie, Mabel (Jess Weixler, TEETH) plays a blind woman and Rosenthal (Adam Pearson, UNDER THE SKIN) is the man with a unique face with whom she falls in love. In the real world of CHAINED FOR LIFE, Mabel has her sight but Rosenthal retains the same distinct features (Pearson has neurofibromatosis); both have been hired for the way they look. As their onscreen characters embark on a twisted and tragic romance in the hands of Herr Director (HOOK's Charlie Korsmo, unrecognizable and rocking a dead-on Herzog voice impersonation), Mabel and Rosenthal develop a special relationship off-camera as they challenge each other to grow as individuals.

Writer/director Aaron Schimberg (who has undergone dozens of reconstructive surgeries throughout his life to address a bilateral cleft palate) has crafted a wholly original, marvelously layered and deeply touching examination of how we define and idolize beauty, and use art as a proxy for our feelings about physical differences. Cinematographer Adam J. Minnick's striking Super-16mm

photography adds a grainy, dreamlike quality to a film already unconcerned with following traditional narrative structures. In parallel to the shooting of the horror film that brings these characters together, the lines between reality and movie are increasingly blurred. The group of physically distinctive actors are forced to sleep in the hospital used for filming as the hotel in which the rest of cast sleeps is not "handicap accessible" and, left to themselves, they take over the narrative with a mixture of fantasy and storytelling.

CHAINED FOR LIFE is awash in a strangely comforting melancholy, but is often very funny and always profoundly human as it challenges us to have difficult conversations about inclusivity and portrayal. It is when we are open to hearing and listening to the voices of the marginalized — their representation having been limited by pre-defined and deeply ingrained notions of beauty — that we are given the gift of films, like CHAINED FOR LIFE, that are truly fantastic. (BRIAN KELLEY)



CLIMAX

2018 • DIR: GASPAR NOÉ • 96 MIN • FRANCE

Anyone familiar with Gaspar Noé's filmography knows generally what they're in for with his newest feature CLIMAX. Like his previous works, CLIMAX is a neon-soaked dreamscape of sex, violence, drugs, bold graphics, and catchy techno. Twenty young, lithe, sex-charged hip-hop dancers have been cooped up together for three days, choreographing a performance that we get to see in its swirling, mesmerizing entirety. The dancers celebrate their hard work with an all-night bacchanalia, complete with plenty of flirtation, coke, and sangria. But someone has put something in the sangria, and from the moment it hits, the party falls into distrust and chaos.

The film opens and closes in a snowy, empty landscape, but everything between takes place in a claustrophobic abandoned boarding school with endless, twisting, mysterious hallways reminiscent of Stanley Kubrick's THE SHINING. The twenty dancers, almost all of whom are played by nonprofessional actors discovered in Parisian dance clubs and YouTube videos, are diverse not only in who they are, but what they want and how they go about getting it. They also each have their own neuroses and insecurities, slowly unveiled to the audience through raw, mostly improvised conversations. Even before the sangria kicks in, tensions are high.

Noé artfully places us among dancers with his penetrative camerawork, swirling in rhythm with their bodies and capturing their movements in a combination of lustful close-ups and kaleidoscopic, Busby Berkeley-esque arrangements. Dancers — artists that inhabit their bodies fully and consciously — are the perfect subject for Noé's newest exploration of insanity. We feel intimately the changes that come over them; their early sexual energy slowly builds into an anxiety reminiscent of the worst trip you can imagine, gradually taking hold of each body in varying forms of contortion and demonic possession. Not since William Friedkin's THE EXORCIST and Andrzej Zulawski's POSSESSION has the physical body been host to more shocking transformations. Sofia Boutella's captivating lead performance anchors the otherwise inexperienced (but nonetheless enthralling) cast, and she eventually becomes the audience's surrogate witness to the mayhem.

With its raw, improvisational style, ambitiously long single takes, obsessively catchy French-techno score and stunning camerawork, CLIMAX is Gaspar Noé's unrivaled masterpiece. (LOGAN TAYLOR)





CLOSE ENEMIES

2018 • DIR: DAVID OELHOFFEN • 111 MIN • FRANCE

Driss, Manuel and Imrane come from the same Parisian suburb — born and raised in the vertical concrete jungle called “la cité” — but their paths forked along the way. Driss (Reda Kateb) became a cop in the narcotics department, using his knowledge and connections to advance, while Manuel (Matthias Schoenaerts) and Imrane (Adel Bencherif) started working for the local drug kingpin. Driss has built his life on the rejection of his upbringing, evidenced both in how he raises his daughter and his commitment to bringing down the drug trafficking gangs. Manuel, separated from his wife and son, has the roguish charm of the small-time thug that became exactly what his peers expected of him.

As Manuel and Imrane prepare for their biggest drug deal yet, tragedy strikes. Manuel barely escapes with his his life, ends up under a cloud of suspicion, and swears to avenge his friend. Teaming up with Driss to uncover what really happened, it becomes clear they might not be ready for the truth behind it all.

David Oelhoffen, the pen behind L'AFFAIRE SK1, tells us a story not about what's right and what's wrong, but about the concept of heritage and what ties a family together. Oelhoffen guides his actors on a nuanced emotional journey as they learn how hard it is to escape where you were born, and how far you might go to defend your family. The film opens and closes in the same parking lot surrounded by the towers of “la cité.” Those towers frame the lot, frame the film, and even frame their lives, forming the arena of their tragedies where every sound of the city echoes and submerges us into the raw brutality of their lives. (SONIA DROULHIOLE)



DACHRA

2018 • DIR: ABDELHAMID BOUCHNAK • 113 MIN • TUNISIA

Tunisia, modern day. Death seems a constant companion to Yasmin; her parents are dead, her grandfather ritually embalms those who passed, and she is plagued by nightmares of a woman in black. But she's not one to shy away from a challenge.

Two university classmates, Walid and Bilel, are given the assignment to produce an exclusive investigation report for their year-end assignment. Bilel suggests Mongia, a suspected witch found naked and mutilated by the highway 25 years ago. While it's a cold case now, Bilel has access to the asylum where she's kept. Following a harrowing meeting with her, they pinpoint where she was discovered and make their way into a remote forest. There, they discover an isolated archaic village filled with mute women, one pigeon-eating child, chunks of hanging meat, and an impressive amount of goats. Something's very not right. Once the overly sympathetic cult leader forces them to stay the night, the friends quickly realize the danger is real, it links to Yasmin's past, and that they may not make it out alive.

For his first feature — which is also the first horror film to come out of Tunisia (no small feat) — Abdelhamid Bouchnak wanted to scare but also denounce. A great student of the most twisted sides of human nature, he calls out witchcraft and cannibalism as the most universally extreme practices — ones that still exist today and are seeing a revival in Northern Africa, where children are disappearing.

He decided to use a very traditional three-act structure but subvert it with quaint visual tropes and a very peculiar way of filming that alternatively pulls you in and out, closer or further away from the characters. This specific technique, resulting in an oversaturation of the senses, reinforces the vivid scenery and dreary atmosphere, and helps shape a tale engrained in local traditions and rituals, infused with unflinching poetry, unlike any you've seen before. (SONIA DROUILHIOLE)





DEADLY GAMES

1990 • DIR: RENÉ MANZOR • 90 MIN • FRANCE

I was 15 years old when DEADLY GAMES (3615 CODE PÈRE NOËL) was released in theaters and on that day I saw the film three times in a row at the local cinema. I couldn't believe what I was seeing: a genre film where a kid turns into a warrior to save himself from an intruder dressed as Santa. 3615 had a huge impact on a whole generation of filmmakers in Europe because René Manzor, the director, broke a taboo. Christmas is a holy event — you don't degrade it and you definitely don't turn it into a nightmare. Manzor's Santa Claus, although not necessarily a bad guy at the start, turns into a boogeyman who robs a 9-year old of his childhood.

The Minitel, a basic version of the internet, was invented in France in the '80s and allowed access to commercial and private addresses, along with chat rooms. The code to access some of these services was "3615" and then the name of the company. The Minitel died in 2012, replaced by the internet as we know it, but while it lasted it was an awesome tool. Yet, as always with technology, it can be misused. Manzor had the perfect evil tool and made a brilliant job turning it into a kid's worst nightmare.

Thomas is a 9-year-old whose mom is the CEO of a toy store. The lucky kid gets to try all the toys and transforms his home into a battlefield where he chases his dog JR around and treats his grandpa as a prisoner. With his mom not coming home for Christmas night, he logs onto the Minitel and starts chatting with Sana, inviting him to visit — with fatal consequences.

I have to mention that this film is a family collaboration. Manzor's son plays Thomas, and his two brothers score and produce the film. One thing's for sure: producing such a film in France in the '80s was certainly not an easy feat, and we're absolutely thrilled to be able to present a French-German restoration and the North American premiere of this French gem to you, dear Fantastic Fest audience, made possible by Le Chat qui Fume in France and Camera Obscura in Germany. (ANNICK MAHNERT)





DOG

2017 • DIR: SAMUEL BENCHETRIT • 87 MIN • FRANCE

Samuel Benchetrit adores telling stories anchored in lost humanity and strange coincidences leading to unplanned meetings, making us see reality and relationships in a different light. But where ASPHALTE was hopeful, he now offers an altogether different film. Adapted from his eponymous novel published in 2015 as he was overcoming depression, DOG is an awkward experience that will cause the viewer to oscillate between laughter and extreme embarrassment.

Jacques Blanchot (Vincent Macaigne) is having the worst week. He's just lost his wife, his home, his job — and his newly acquired Hitler lookalike dog — thanks to a careless driver. At a loss for what to do, he decides to attend the pre-paid dog training sessions with the sympathetic owner of the pet shop (Bouli Lanners), and organically begins to take the place of his late animal in the sessions. Gradually losing touch with his humanity, he adopts the lifestyle and behavior of a dog.

We are the silent witnesses of the terrible degradation of a man, perfectly incarnated by the always tender Macaigne. A dog is the only completely tame animal living alongside humans in cities, one which never questions people's motives, and one that accepts

whatever happens to it as just. Blanchot has the same sincerity and innocence in how he appraises the world, and he pays the utmost price for it. While we witness, we cannot judge; Jacques doesn't see the world the same way we do. He can't fathom that people might be out to hurt him (especially on purpose) and is thus totally incapable of surviving in modern society. He's completely sympathetic in a world that's not.

The film vacillates tonally between violence, black comedy, and absurdity — exactly like life — and illustrates perfectly how everything can collapse in a second: love, family, honor, relationships. The time and place are purposefully undetermined, which dampens the violence while showing the universality of such a tale. Visually it's lean, polished, sometimes sober and cold, holding up a dark mirror to Blanchot and us.

Love it or hate it, Benchetrit spins a tale, which, unexpectedly, has more bite than bark. (SONIA DROULHIOLE)





DOGMAN

2018 • DIR: MATTEO GARRONE • 102 MIN • ITALY, FRANCE

Based on a real crime that happened more than thirty years ago, Matteo Garrone's searing DOGMAN is yet another look at life and violence set in a derelict estate outside of an unnamed town in Italy. Marcello Fonte, in a career-defining role that won him the Palme d'Or, is the titular "Dogman" Marcello, a small and gentle creature who spends his days running a dog grooming shop, hanging out with his daughter, and playing soccer with the neighbourhood team. However, it's his on-and-off semi-friendship with violent thug Simone which becomes the defining characteristic of Marcello's life, and as their relationship spirals violently out of control, there will be consequences for everyone.

Garrone's eye for the seedier side of Italy hidden within its picturesque ruins is well-documented in films like GOMORRA, and DOGMAN continues this exploration. While smaller in scope, the story is vastly more focused on the psychological examination of a character defined by his surroundings and his desire to be accepted. Marcello is the pinnacle of a Garrone character: gentle and caring, yet still party to the petty thievery that infects the estate, which sees him dealing coke on the side.

Garrone's decision to stick to Marcello throughout the film's runtime establishes a connection with the character which only serves to highlight Fonte's brilliant acting skills. Not since Hoffman got under the skin of Rizzo in MIDNIGHT COWBOY has a performance so brilliantly defined the character it's depicting. Down to the shifting, questioning and constantly begging look in Marcello's eyes, Fonte creates something as real and vital as someone you would encounter in real life.

As the two men find themselves locked in a journey that won't end well, it's hard to not be impressed by Garrone's razor-sharp focus on the bully and the bullied: neither completely innocent from the situation they find themselves in, both products of a country whose moral compass — according to Garrone — is in a tailspin that is only too relatable. DOGMAN is a moral crime film with a real and captivating heart, a true modern masterpiece from one of the leading lights of Italian cinema. (EVRIM ERSOY)



DONNYBROOK

2018 • DIR: TIM SUTTON • 101 MIN • USA

Deep in the backwoods of Indiana, there's a bare-knuckle, battle royale fighting contest called "The Donnybrook." Each contestant must pony up \$1,000 to enter, no holds are barred and the winner walks away with \$100,000. In Tim Sutton's (DARK NIGHT) film adaptation of Frank Bill's debut novel, the fates of two already desperate men propel them brutally towards a brawl with stakes far higher than expected.

Jarhead Earl (Jamie Bell, BILLY ELLIOT) wants a good life for his wife and children. It is this seemingly noble cause — pretty much the only identifiably righteous motive in a film filled with dishonorable people and actions — that drives him to rob a gun store to obtain the entry fee for the Donnybrook. Meanwhile, Chainsaw Angus (Frank Grillo, WHEELMAN) is a former professional prize fighter-turned-meth dealer in business with his double-crossing sister (Margaret Qualley, THE LEFTOVERS), and caught in the sights of a crooked cop (James Badge Dale, WORLD WAR Z). As Jarhead and Chainsaw approach each other and the Donnybrook, the shockingly violent costs of their quest for an escape from hopelessness become increasingly obvious.

DONNYBROOK is a gut-punch of a film with an unflinchingly bleak view of the apparently bottomless depths of human depravity. Bill, who works the nightshift in a paint factory when he's not writing, created a striking world in his novel, and it's brought to ferocious life by Sutton and his team. The cast inhabits these feral Midwestern souls without reservation, which makes the punches in the jaw-dropping and raw spectacle that is the Donnybrook resonate loud and clear.

DONNYBROOK is a gothic nightmare of an ever-more despondent working class, and we at Fantastic Fest are excited to send audiences down the river on a journey into a heartland of darkness. (BRIAN KELLEY)





AN EVENING WITH BEVERLY LUFF LINN

2018 • DIR: JIM HOSKING • 108 MIN • USA

We're all familiar with the insanity and one-of-a-kind experience that was *THE GREASY STRANGLER*, the extremely gross and inherently Fantastic Fest-ish movie that received ovations when screened in 2016. Jim Hosking is back with a second feature that maintains his trademarked preposterous comedy, but tones down the grease for more emotional depth, and will please the fans of his unique voice.

Lulu Danger (Aubrey Plaza, goofy and touching) is deeply unsatisfied with her mundane life; one could even call her desperate. She's just been sacked from her waitressing job by her own husband Shane (Emile Hirsch, real-life cartoon villain) and her home life is not faring any better. In a misguided attempt to get them out of financial trouble, Shane asks his Stooges-esque co-workers to help him rob Lulu's brother, only to become the target of the world's saddest hitman (Jemaine Clement, just plain awkward). But Lulu, awakened by the mysterious return of a past flame, the titular Beverly Luff Linn (Craig Robinson, mainly grunting), turns the tables on them and flees with the hitman and the cash to attend Beverly's mysterious show.

AN EVENING WITH BEVERLY LUFF LINN (in two words, please) is a delight of offbeat, deadpan humor delivered by a troop of seasoned comedians. What makes it most delightful is that everyone acts as if it all were perfectly normal, and these events just happen as a matter of course. The gallery of quirky personas are so out of place that they create their own universe (augmented by the eclectic score and tacky décor), as they remain steadfastly in character and committed to the gag. They're clearly having the time of their lives, but the absurd humor is also a way to underline how utterly alone and in want of emotional connection every single one of them is... and their plight is very much our own. (SONIA DROULHIOLE)



FERAL

2018 • DIR: ANDRÉS KAISER • 97 MIN • MEXICO

Found-footage films and documentaries are two genres that have arguably reached the oversaturation point, yet Andrés Kaiser's *FERAL* is the exception that proves there's still plenty of life and brilliance to mine within both.

Somewhere in the Oaxacan mountains are the burnt-out remains of a shelter that housed a psychoanalyst priest who was obsessed with rehabilitating savage children to place them back into society. Through videotape diaries, we're treated to a portrait of a man whose singular pursuit of this goal saw him excommunicated from the church he holds dear, separated from society, and plagued by a self-doubt which chipped away at his humanity. However, a more sinister picture begins to emerge as interviews with individuals from the nearby village and his close family appear. It's a dark secret that may hold the key to the disappearance of the priest and the destruction of the shelter.

Kaiser's clever found-footage documentary weaves a spellbinding tale by eschewing jump scares in favor of deep character exploration that threatens to spill into malevolence at any moment. Examining questions of blind faith, trust, and doubt, Kaiser explores the individual in relation to the church through

a critical lens that highlights the hypocrisies prevalent within religion, and builds on the idea of the "other," an ostracized figure both feared and reviled.

The videotape diaries reveal conflicting elements: the nobility of the disgraced priest's mission at odds with the unnatural goings-on that appear at the edges, leaving the audience unsettled. Holding his cards close to his chest, Kaiser keeps the truth hidden as long as possible, hinting at the horrors that lay buried deep within the film. A small cast of remarkable actors help keep the atmosphere taut, tight, and frightening in the build-up to a haunting and unforgettable climax. A brilliant, intriguing debut that marks Kaiser as a talent to watch. (EVRIM ERSOY)



2018 • DIR: JASON TROST • 89 MIN • USA

the creators. BEATS OF RAGE replicates that experience, adding in an understanding of apocalyptic sequels and the continuing quest of the weary warrior setting out again.

Bad sequels don't let the character evolve, but instead just replicate the structure of the first film. BEATS OF RAGE adopts the best parts of the best sequels, crafting a story that tears down the main character in order to build him into something even stronger, and giving the audience the thrills and laughs they have come to expect from this franchise. (JAMES EMANUEL SHAPIRO)

Director Jason Trost (going solo this time as his co-director from THE FP, Brandon Trost, has become one of Hollywood's busiest cinematographers) used his immense love of big budget action storytelling — which notes to hit and which clichés to embrace — to make THE FP an amazing audience experience and an instant cult classic. Audiences embraced and cheered for each action moment, reveling in the cinematic language they shared with





GIRLS WITH BALLS

2018 • DIR: OLIVIER AFONSO • 77 MIN • FRANCE, BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG, SPAIN

This tale is about girls with balls. Literally. Of course we're talking about the volleyballs they carry around as part of their gear, but they will need to grow a pair to face off against a group of degenerate French rednecks led by Denis Lavant, whose presence alone should be enough to make you want to check out this film.

Amusing aside: English seems to be the only language in which you can describe balls and balls with the same word.

To be honest, the story doesn't have an ounce of originality: a bus driver (the coach, in our case) is forced to take a short cut and our protagonists end up at a small tavern where they very quickly piss off the locals. And then, of course, the hunt starts. But what director Olivier Afonso has done brilliantly is add wicked, bitchy humor to our characters, along with picking at the cracks in the group's solidarity before the hunt even starts. Albeit a team, our players grapple with the pressure to win, with career opportunities, and with jealousy.

GIRLS WITH BALLS is a molotov cocktail filled with mean jokes and spicy dialogue led by a group of very talented actresses who all give stellar performances. It's a movie made for all of us fed up with only seeing our screen counterparts in the background, proving that women in horror can have fun and kick ass too. While directed by a man, Afonso seems to be just as bored with the typical tropes of the supposed weaker sex as any woman, and the message is clear: girls can throw a punch as well as any man, and they're even more deadly with a full net of volleyballs. Expect gore, salacious jokes, lethal Chihuahuas, and a group of charmingly mean girls. (ANNICK MAHNERT)





THE GUILTY

2018 • DIR: GUSTAV MÖLLER • 85 MIN • DENMARK

I can't tell you very much about what happens in Gustav Möller's feature debut, *THE GUILTY*. The spoiler-free premise I will share is rather simple: Jakob Cedergren, who is on screen for seemingly every single frame of the film, plays an emergency responder stressed to his breaking point. On this fateful night, he takes an assortment of calls from drug addicts and drunks, either getting into fights at bars or falling off their bikes and scraping their knees. Then he takes a call from someone who has been kidnapped. The victim is in a van but doesn't know where they are or where they are going. Cedergren's character, Asger, must use what wits he has left to find them before his call reaches a potentially violent conclusion.

Here's what else I can tell you: there's almost nothing a director can show on screen that's more effective than what you'll imagine in your own head with the right prompting. Möller's *THE GUILTY* is the latest example of taking a straightforward conflict, keeping the setting in one contained location, working with a terrific acting talent, and pushing everything else into the audience's head.

Möller keeps the running time here at a brisk 85 minutes, and even if Cedergren dominates the screen, Möller and director of photography Jasper J. Spanning keep things interesting inside the frame, finding every tense angle possible to shoot their main actor. The sound design in *THE GUILTY* is equally as impressive as the audience desperately seeks out any sound over the phone that can help both them and Asger get closer to finding a safe resolution to the crime. Finally, Möller proves that the further we rely on our own imagination and our own expectations, the easier it is to keep the twists and turns coming. (JAMES EMANUEL SHAPIRO)



HOLD THE DARK

2018 • DIR: JEREMY SAULNIER • 125 MIN • USA

The newest and boldest film from acclaimed director Jeremy Saulnier (GREEN ROOM, BLUE RUIN), HOLD THE DARK is a taut examination of human nature and the mysteries of the wilderness.

Retired naturalist and wolf expert Russell Core (Jeffrey Wright) journeys to the edge of civilization in northern Alaska at the request of Medora Slone (Riley Keough), a young mother whose son was killed by a pack of starving wolves. As Core attempts to help the woman process her grief, a strange and dangerous relationship between these two lonely souls develops.

But when Medora's husband Vernon (Alexander Skarsgård) returns from his brutal tour in the Iraq War, the news of his dead child ignites a violent chain of events across this frozen landscape. As Donald Marium (James Badge Dale), a local cop, races to stop Vernon's seemingly senseless rampage, Core finds himself trapped on a perilous odyssey into the heart of darkness.

Based on the 2014 novel by William Giraldi and adapted for the screen by Sundance Grand Jury Prize-winning filmmaker Macon Blair, HOLD THE DARK expands on Saulnier's fascination with the complications of revenge, the horror of violence, and the moral flaws of his characters. Once again, Saulnier's cinematic storytelling hinges on an airtight command of atmosphere and breathtaking suspense, while expanding his scope with flickers of supernatural mysticism.

The result is a gripping psychological thriller, as mythic and haunting as a ghost tale told around a crackling midnight campfire.





HOLIDAY

2018 • DIR: ISABELLA EKLÖF • 93 MIN • DENMARK, THE NETHERLANDS, SWEDEN, TURKEY

Pretty blonde Sascha (Victoria Carmen Sonne) is the epitome of mainstream attractiveness, and is invited to join her Danish criminal boyfriend Michael (Lai Yde) on a no-expense-spared summer holiday on Turkey's idyllic Turquoise Coast. The young woman's presence requires her to take on the role of a human trinket, a girl-shaped bauble whose inclusion in the titular getaway with Michael and his colleagues comes with unspoken expectations and demands. And she knows it.

The feature film debut of Swedish director and writer Isabella Eklöf, *HOLIDAY* is marked by a fashion magazine gloss with its aesthetic of hyper-commodified femininity. The look of the film feeds shrewdly into a fearless critique of what happens to a young woman who has been objectified to the point where she can only understand her own identity through the very terms of her objectification. At the heart of the film lies an undeniably brutal rape scene that makes explicit the until-then ambient, rumbling suggestion of violence and threat that surrounds Sascha: as a young woman in this man's world, violence is not just a possibility, but a day-to-day reality.

The neon-colored bikinis, nightclubs, fancy drinks, and crystal-clear swimming pools lie in sharp contrast to the dark revelations of Sascha's journey, sparked into action when she meets free-spirited Dutchman Thomas (Thijs Römer). In the hands of a less capable, thoughtful, and original director, this scenario could easily collapse into the terrain of the clichéd love triangle trope, but Eklöf knows the world is never so simple or clear-cut for women in situations like Sascha's. Rather, violence becomes viral — a way of maintaining the status quo, even if that comes at the loss of agency and the acceptance of an identity that transcends two-dimensional commodified womanhood.

Like so much in Eklöf's film, the title is both an invitation and a provocation: *HOLIDAY* is no escape, but rather an unflinching, urgent, and desperately important statement about the world so many young women find themselves in. (ALEXANDRA HELLER-NICHOLAS)





HOUSE OF SWEAT AND TEARS

2018 • DIR: SONIA ESCOLANO • 104 MIN • SPAIN

Sonia Escolano's mesmerising treatise on religion, faith, and belief marries the aesthetic style of European cinema with the language of horror films to delivery a story both unique and shocking in its take on extremism.

Somewhere in an unnamed country, "She," a mysterious and enigmatic figure, leads a religious cult. Through strict rules and even stricter hierarchy she ensures that her flock never strays from the path of righteousness, and those who even dare to suggest anything out of the ordinary are punished without mercy.

However, a series of events start to corrupt the very fabric of their reality; doubt starts to set in for some of the members, and the arrival of a mysterious outsider sets She and her followers on a path of collision from which no one will emerge unscathed.

Highly stylized and deliberately plotted, HOUSE OF SWEAT AND TEARS marks the arrival of an original voice within genre cinema. Exploring the murky waters of blind faith and rebellion, and cleverly divided into chapters to better accentuate the journey of

its characters, the film slowly dissects what happens to a community ruled by fear when doubt is introduced into its fabric.

In the role of Ella, Alzira Gomez acts as the bridge between the audience and the mysterious world of the film. Her performance of a character questioning all of her existence is tinged with the fear of discovering the truth as it collides with the desire to rip the curtain off the duplicitous nature of her surroundings.

Perhaps the biggest draw of the film is Escolano's ability to place the viewer in the middle of a world at once familiar and foreign, a world full of mysterious details which do not require mundane explanations but suggest something just outside the sphere of our understanding. A film that asks its audience to think, to question, and to discuss, HOUSE OF SWEAT AND TEARS is intelligent and uncomfortable filmmaking that challenges perceptions at every level. (EVRIM ERSOY)





I USED TO BE NORMAL: A BOYBAND FANGIRL STORY

2018 • DIR: JESSICA LESKI • 96 MIN • AUSTRALIA

Elif, Sadia, Dara and Susan are never likely to meet, yet they would all instantly connect through their shared passion for boy bands. Not all boy bands, and not just any boy band.

Elif is a Directioner, a superfan of UK pop group One Direction. But Directioners don't say "1D" or "One Direction;" they call them "the boys" as if they know them personally, with an implied sense of ownership of the group. Sadia, on the other hand, fell in love with Nick Carter and The Backstreet Boys around '97. Although Nick loved water and Sadia didn't know how to swim, she was still sure she was destined to end up with him. Far across the globe in Sydney, there's Dara, whose life changed when she discovered the British band Take That and its sensible dad figure Gary Barlow. Take That was the first thing that Dara can remember liking on her own, and that sense of discovery and the first pangs of self-identity and independence would link her to the band forever. Finally there's the elder stateswoman, Susan, original fangirl of the original boy band, The Beatles. She remembers their first Australian tour and how parents weren't prepared for the mania that their presence would inspire. These four women are from different countries and different backgrounds and, while they may not know each other, their obsessions put them on similar paths.

What's perhaps most striking about the film is the way it never mocks its subjects, and never encourages the audience to do so. These women are presented as normal — as normal as anyone is — each with a deep abiding love that started when they were young and carried throughout their lives. While things have changed as they've grown, including the way they relate to the bands, that love is still a part of them. These boys will always hold a special place in their hearts, the same way many of us imprinted on comic books or video games or movies, huddled together in a friend's basement developing our own obsessions.

Maybe, on the surface, a documentary about boy bands and the women who love them seems out of place at Fantastic Fest, but these women *are* us. Their fandom is pure and wholesome and, yes, a bit extreme at times, but it's also inspiring and joyful and heartwarming. They found acceptance and family and themselves in their love of Nick and Gary and John and Zayn, the same way we did with Stan and Wes and Michael and Jason. And when you get down to it, that love, that feeling of belonging, is what Fantastic Fest is all about. (LUKE MULLEN)



IN FABRIC

2018 • DIR: PETER STRICKLAND • 118 MIN • UNITED KINGDOM

With his two previous features at Fantastic Fest, Peter Strickland proved his ability to utilize soundscapes (BERBERIAN SOUND STUDIO) and lush visuals (THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY) to unrivaled effect. With IN FABRIC, he combines both skills to create a nightmarish vision of materialism and obsession.

Sheila, a bank manager and single mother, decides to dip her feet into online dating. But first she must find the perfect dress for the occasion. She begins her search in an expansive '70s-era department store run by carefully manicured employees who dote on their clientele with a peculiar brand of verbose, enigmatic hospitality. Immediately, she is drawn to a glamorous red dress that miraculously fits her like a glove.

Initially, her new dress seems like a good luck charm, but much like similar icons in horror films past, this one harbors mysterious powers and refuses to be disposed of. Sheila's story is just the beginning of the garment's dark journey where nothing good happens to the women who stumble across it.

But where did the dress come from and what is going on behind the scenes of this strange department store? What's with the hypnotic television advertisements, and why do women seem compelled to wait eagerly outside the store each morning? Why are the employees dressed in head-to-toe black, and why do they only spout incoherent musings about beauty and perfection? Why are there whispers echoing throughout the store, and is that moaning coming from the mannequins?

Strickland clearly has much to say about the fashion industry and our obsession with unattainable perfection, including scenes of materialistic insanity that rival Black Friday security cam footage. Still, he doesn't just rest on this commonly-touted critique. Like the giallo films that he draws from with his collage of rich, kaleidoscopic imagery, he finds depth and complexity in the beautiful figures of women and mannequins, delighting in their form even as he destroys them. (LOGAN TAYLOR)





THE INNOCENT

2018 • DIR: SIMON JAUQUOMET • 113 MIN • SWITZERLAND, GERMANY

Last year we introduced you to Swiss filmmaker Lisa Brühlmann, who “blue” your mind with her tale about female body transformation. Switzerland seems to have spawned a new breed of filmmakers who are no longer interested in rural dramas or in showing our beautiful landscapes. Instead, they dig deep into the darkness that inhabits us, and they manage to create tales that will unsettle you and make you wonder about your own existence.

Enter Simon Jaquemet with his second feature, *THE INNOCENT*. Already creating a buzz with 2014’s furious tale about youth (*CHRIEG* a.k.a. *WAR*), here Jaquemet takes us on an unforgettable journey into the heart of religion, God, and the Devil, in which a woman’s faith is tested when her ex-lover comes back to visit her after twenty years in prison.

Ruth is a seemingly happy wife and mother stuck in her routines, both occupational and religious. Her job at a neuroscience lab

requires her to turn a blind eye to the ways the doctors play God with monkeys, and it’s becoming more and more difficult for her to keep everything on an even keel. Her fragile reality starts to crumble when her ex-lover Andreas pays her a short visit, and her resulting questioning of reality and erratic behavior pushes her family and her church to extreme measures.

THE INNOCENT takes its time but it will creep up on you, plunging you into a cinematic nightmare where science and religion clash. Backed by the fantastic cinematography of Gabriel Sandu and featuring an outstanding performance by Judith Hofmann as Ruth, *THE INNOCENT* is probably the best film to come out of Switzerland in a very long time, and it should establish Simon Jaquemet as a solid new player in the film panorama. (ANNICK MAHNERT)





KEEP AN EYE OUT

2018 • DIR: QUENTIN DUPIEUX • 73 MIN • FRANCE

Fugain (Grégoire Ludig) is in trouble. He found a dead body on the street next to his apartment in the middle of the night, and now he's being interrogated by Chief Inspector Buron (Benoit Poelvoorde) — and describing this man as a “stickler for detail” is a euphemism if there ever was one. Trapped in the police station at night, Fugain's growing incomprehension mirrors the burgeoning comedy, especially when left alone with the adjutant (played by Marc Fraize, one of France's newest comedic talents, who famously did a sketch where he just stoically smiled at the audience for the majority of his set). Behind closed doors, many things can happen; the question is how well you can hide them...

Quentin Dupieux has a rich body of work, from directing music videos to films, along with making music as one of the frontrunners of the French Touch dance music scene under the moniker Mr. Oizo. (Interestingly, Dupieux's use of music in KEEP AN EYE OUT is notable in its absence, making it land all the harder when it does underline the action.) From STEAK (where the worst thing

that can happen is to be a Phil Collins fan) to the serial killer tire in RUBBER, from WRONG COPS' irreverence to REALITY's take on the film industry, Dupieux shapes contemporary artworks without always infusing them with “real” meaning, showcasing his love of “le grand n'importe quoi” (which literally translates as “big complete nonsense”) in his singular universe. KEEP AN EYE OUT is no different in that regard.

Through a thinly veiled homage to classic French police films (both GARDE A VUE from Claude Miller and PEUR SUR LA VILLE from Henri Verneuil), Dupieux offers us a new take on this genre. The interrogation of this unlucky, flustered man — who could very well be us — is the best pretext for his reliably arbitrary dialogues and absurd lines. However, it's delivered with a warmth and compassion than is unusual for Dupieux, consoling us with the refreshing perspective that our lives may not have any sense or meaning. And that's okay. (SONIA DROULHIOLE)





KNIFE + HEART

2018 • DIR: YANN GONZALEZ • 102 MIN • FRANCE

Exploitation cinema may never be more wonderfully gay than it is in Yann Gonzalez's grand follow-up to his debut, *YOU AND THE NIGHT*. While *YOU AND THE NIGHT* embraced the questions of motivation and identity that surround an all-genders orgy, *KNIFE + HEART* is straight-up trashy genre fun. It's told in the recognizable visual and narrative language of European giallos, with kill scenes reminiscent of a William Lustig grindhouse thriller, and a terrific score from Gonzalez's collaborator and brother Anthony Gonzalez (aka M83).

KNIFE + HEART is a joy for genre fans to behold. While Gonzalez embraces the extremes in 1970s exploitation, he goes beyond homage to bring sensitivity and real affection to a film filled with the type of characters who are often absent or simply caricatures in other films of this type. The representation is authentic as this is a horror story only possible with LGBTQ+ characters. It offers a heavy dose of love and heart in a narrative soaked with blood and semen. (JAMES EMANUEL SHAPIRO)

Co-presented with:



Anne (the always great Vanessa Paradis) is at her wits' end. Not only is her long-term relationship with her lover and editor Lois (Kate Moran) over, but now someone is murdering her actors. An unknown masked killer is laying siege to her low-budget gay porn production company, and while she hasn't a clue why, she can at least make the best of a bad situation and bend the situation into the plot of her newest film, *HOMO-CIDE*. But as the killings continue, her employees go into hiding, sending Anne on a quest to investigate the motives and history of the monster who strikes from the shadows.





LADYWORLD

2018 • DIR: AMANDA KRAMER • 93 MIN • USA

LADYWORLD wastes no time plunging us into its surreal apocalyptic reality, opening with a black screen and sonic roar before introducing us to its cast of characters: eight teenage girls in varying states of childish dress up, all slowly gathering themselves after a soul-shaking earthquake has buried the house in rubble.

Amanda Kramer's ingenue cast of eight disparate personalities function as a microcosm of America. The girls are divided, all grappling with the terrifying, unknown situation in their own ways. The concerns of teenage girls — the vicious teasing, the painful insecurities, the questions of identity — are exacerbated to a degree that feels painfully familiar yet still hyper-dramatized.

The girls eventually turn on each other, collapsing into a female-centric "Lord of the Flies" power struggle. The director's theatrical background undoubtedly helped her craft this claustrophobic chamber piece that utilizes every corridor, closet and hiding spot to its maximum effectiveness.

The film's sound design doesn't let up after that first rumbling crescendo. The breathy, jazzy, hallucinogenic soundtrack oscillates between reality and fantasy. Sometimes the score is grounded in the rooms themselves, where dangers and secrets lurk in every corner. Other times, the sounds seem to come from inside our own heads as a panting, panicky whisper. And in some of the most terrifying moments, they're guttural, tribal, animalistic noises like a cat trapped in cage.

LADYWORLD dares to probe the darkest reaches of the teenage female mind, ultimately becoming an existential meditation on the most important values in our society. Even at the tender age of the film's protagonists, they're already well aware of what the world expects of them and where they come up short. It's a heartbreaking scenario made poignant through careful, thoughtful dialogue and pitch-perfect performances across the board. Yet while the film dares to ask these tough questions, many remain unanswered — and really, what could be more lifelike than that? (LOGAN TAYLOR)





LAIKA

2017 • DIR: AUREL KLIMT • 88 MIN • CZECH REPUBLIC

The historically accurate context is this: In October of 1957, USSR leader Nikita Khrushchev wanted to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution by launching Sputnik 2, ignoring the fact that the capsule was nowhere near ready. A three-year-old mutt named Laika was caught wandering the streets of Moscow. Little did she know that she would be the first dog to ever make it to space... and to meet her destiny there thanks to a failing cooling system that cooked her alive. Her horrible death triggered a movement against animal cruelty and the mutt became pretty famous, even appearing in the Marvel comic GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY, inspiring the character Cosmo the Spacedog.

But that's not the story that director Aurel Klimt wants to tell. Klimt's is a charming animated tale full of joy and catchy tunes in which Laika survives the flight and, via a very funny plot device, ends up on a planet in a parallel universe. After crash-landing, Laika meets a fleet of other "beings," befriends them, makes a new home for herself, and all is

well in the best of all worlds... for a while. The unexpected crash-landing of another visitor disturbs the balance, leading to a comedic stand-off using freeze-guns, bizarre local plants, and bananas.

The design of the stop-motion puppets is reminiscent of certain '70s children's shows, and the look feels old, dusty, even ugly — and that's the beauty of it! LAIKA is a fantastic animated feature from the Czech Republic filled with funny characters and moments, and it's both a wonder and a shame that it has flown under the radar for so long. Along with the humor, it is also filled with clever socio-political commentary, the strongest being that the only real threat to a society, whether on planet Earth or in another galaxy, is humankind. Banananananana! (ANNICK MAHNERT)





LEVEL 16

2018 • DIR: DANISHKA ESTERHAZY • 102 MIN • CANADA

Canadian filmmaker Danishka Esterhazy proves she has a knack for female-centric storytelling with *LEVEL 16*, a twist-filled thriller with dark political undertones. The girls of Vestalis Academy have been working hard to enter Level 16, the final level of their training to become the ultimate examples of femininity. They've internalized the four key virtues of being a "clean girl": obedience, cleanliness, patience, and humility. All of their training has been leading to this final level, after which they'll be adopted into the home of an upper-class family and their lives can truly begin. Or so they think.

When Vivien moves into Rose Hall, she runs into an old friend from the early levels, Sophia. These two girls share secrets from their past, and new secrets as well when Sophia tells Vivien not to take her vitamins one night. What she discovers that evening alters her path forever.

The Academy may be molding the girls into proper young ladies, but it isn't providing any skills to be more than that. Early on, it's made clear the girls can't read, not even their own names. Those names — given to the

girls by the Academy and inspired by famous actresses of the Hollywood Golden Age — are markers of a simpler time, when women were worshipped on screen but rarely encouraged to be educated or outspoken. The girls' internal battle between obedience and rebellion is expressed through stunningly agile performances from fresh-faced talent we are bound to see more of, particularly leads Katie Douglas and Celina Martin.

A cold, dystopian vision with echoes of *THE HANDMAID'S TALE*, *LEVEL 16* is an essential film for our time. Esterhazy explores the values traditionally emphasized when raising young girls — uniformity over originality, beauty over brains, obedience over free-thinking — in a sharp satire, loaded with careful details that flesh out a fully-realized science fiction world. Shot in icy hues and a stark, disorienting one-point perspective, *LEVEL 16* is a lesson in both style and substance that is uncomfortably timely and importantly wide-reaching. (LOGAN TAYLOR)





LIFE AFTER FLASH

2018 • DIR: LISA DOWNS • 94 MIN • UNITED KINGDOM

Part celebration, part behind-the-scenes footage, but all new and brilliant material, Lisa Downs' documentary *LIFE AFTER FLASH* is a perfect example of what a filmmaker can achieve with a beloved cult classic and an incredible story that has never been told.

Sam J. Jones is best known as the man who played Flash Gordon, but the true extent of his life story is more intricate, complicated, and touching than anyone could guess. From his meteoric rise to catastrophic fall and his journey back, his story is 100% universal: an authentic man who overcomes obstacles to truly find himself.

A plethora of perspectives — *FLASH GORDON* cast members, Brian May from Queen, fans, and production crew — add texture and fun as they share stories that make you roar with laughter or sit open-mouthed in astonishment.

Practically a blueprint on what it takes to build a cult film, as well as an examination of how that film survives and the impact it has on those involved, *LIFE AFTER FLASH* is a true journey into the heart of cinema and what makes it great. (EVRIM ERSOY)



LORDS OF CHAOS

2018 • DIR: JONAS ÅKERLUND • 112 MIN • USA

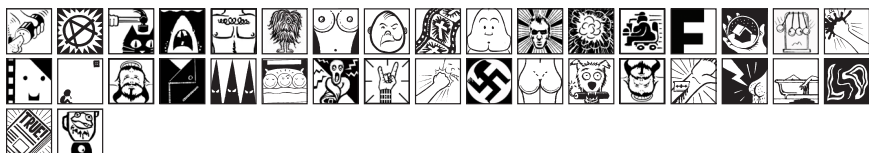
From Jonas Åkerlund, famed director of music videos by U2, Queens of the Stone Age, Beyonce, Metallica, Lady Gaga, Rammstein, and Madonna, comes the true story of the band Mayhem and the beginning of Black Metal at large. Known for controversial live performances with their lead singer cutting himself onstage, they were implicated in church burnings throughout Norway, along with a pattern of violence by their band members that culminated in a dark coup de grace.

Øystein Aarseth, better known as Euronymous (Rory Culkin), forms Mayhem in Oslo in 1984 alongside bandmates Necrobutcher (Jonathan Barnwell) and Metalion (Sam Coleman) to push his own brand of music, Black Metal. Focusing on the faster, darker side of the musical spectrum and a counter to all the "life metal" bands (as he dubbed them), he unknowingly sets himself down an ominous path.

Mayhem eventually recruits a new singer from Sweden, named simply Dead (Jack Kilmer), a troubled youth with an unhealthy obsession with mortality. Before heading out on tour, Dead buries his clothes to be

closer to the afterlife, the first of many signs of a troubled psyche that will lead him to his suicide. Upon finding his friend's body, Euronymous purchases a disposable camera to photograph the corpse for a Mayhem album cover. This embracing of destruction and violence would become their hallmark, drawing others into a legacy of violence and burned churches that would change Norway and musical history forever.

Åkerlund and screenwriter Dennis Magnusson have dazzlingly adapted the legendary biography by Michael Moynihan and Didrik Søderlind. Refusing to glorify or condone the musicians' actions, it's a wickedly dark yet humanized tale of talented youth who journeyed down a destructive path. Culkin, Emory Cohen and Valter Skarsgård bring fully fleshed characters to the screen, giving us insight to the motivations of real-life people who are as complex as the music they brought into the world. (NOAH LEE)





LUZ

2018 • DIR: TILMAN SINGER • 70 MIN • GERMANY

Taxi driver Luz enters a brightly lit but mostly deserted police station at night. Simultaneously, Nora is at a local bar attempting to seduce psychotherapist Dr. Rossini, telling the story of how her girlfriend jumped out of a moving taxi. As the conversation and sexual tension swells, Nora shares not only her connection to Luz, but the dark secrets of their past, making it increasingly clear that something evil is stalking Luz. It's when we return to Luz's interrogation that things quickly spiral out of control into a menacing and oftentimes surreal series of events.

LUZ, the first feature film from writer and director Tilman Singer, brings to mind the works of Lucio Fulci and Andrzej Zulawski with its ethereal and eerie staging, crossed with a darkly angelic electronic soundtrack that bleats with '80s saxophones. Peppered throughout with eruptions of kinetic violence, sexual tension, and bizarre humanity, Singer bursts onto the festival scene as a filmmaker

to watch. LUZ travels beyond the static films of the present, reclaiming a past where atmosphere and emotion drove horror, but unafraid of utilizing a punch of gore to tear through the tension. As Luz relates her narrative under hypnosis, through inventive conversational and audible dualities, we experience the mastery of Singer's storytelling abilities.

Fantastic Fest invites you to be drawn into this mesmerizing and frightening film that turns the tired tales of demonic hauntings into a fresh and claustrophobic homage to films that have come before. (NOAH LEE)





MADAM YANKELOVA'S FINE LITERATURE CLUB

2018 • DIR: GUILHAD EMILIO SCHENKER • 90 MIN • ISRAEL

Sophie is getting old. Her beauty is fading faster than she hoped, and with 99 trophies under her belt, she's only one away from becoming a full-fledged Lordess, one of the upper members of MADAM YANKELOVA'S FINE LITERATURE CLUB. Once a Lordess, Sophie can stop luring men into the club's cannibalistic clutches. She could age gracefully and respectfully among her fellow retired temptresses.

But the Lordesses are tired of Sophie's string of less-than-stellar dates. Her latest offerings are barely fit to look at, let alone grind up into fine hotdog meat. They give Sophie an ultimatum: she either wins the next week's trophy or loses everything, falling to the rank of the unappreciated Sanitation Department. Luckily she meets Yosef, an intelligent man who expresses genuine interest in Sophie's knowledge and passions. As their romance blossoms, Sophie must choose between the man of her dreams and the Literature Club, who firmly and cynically deny the existence of love. Add to the mix a scheming young seductress hellbent on usurping Sophie's place on the throne, and an idealistic maid escaping the club for a better life, and you have one of the most charming, age-diverse, all-female ensemble casts in recent memory.

It's not every day we find an over-the-top, hyper-stylized genre feature out of Israel. Guilhad Emilio Schenker's debut took us very much by surprise, largely thanks to its richly textured, deeply saturated fantasy world and artful ability to combine dark comedy with a gruesome premise. That's not to say MADAM YANKELOVA'S FINE LITERATURE CLUB is just a quirky escape; it also explores timely questions of a woman's worth in society. Do we lose everything the day our looks start to fade? Can we rise above such superficial concerns and value intellect? Are we destined to the class we're born into no matter how hard we try? And perhaps the most important question of all: how much are we willing to give up for love? (LOGAN TAYLOR)



World Premiere

4K Restoration



MANIAC

1980 • DIR: WILLIAM LUSTIG • 88 MIN • USA

Easily one of the nastiest slasher films the horror subgenre has ever seen, grindhouse auteur Bill Lustig's *MANIAC* took a notably inner-city approach to its murderous narrative revolving around a sweaty, abused hulk (pock-faced character actor icon Joe Spinell) who begins collecting pretty women's scalps as trophies in Times Square.

For those who tire of their body count pictures being set in the safety of suburbia, Lustig and Spinell (who co-wrote the picture) create an environment of diseased atrocity, capturing the Big Apple in all its guttural glory as the freewheeling '70s gave way to a much darker, depraved period in NYC's existence (a pre-Giuliani cinematic experience, set just before crack became king on the corners). Lustig's approach is casually painful, calling in *DAWN OF THE DEAD* and *FRIDAY THE 13TH* splatter maestro Tom Savini to deliver some of the gnarliest SFX gags of his already storied career (an exploding, shot-gunned head becoming its Fangoria-ready centerpiece).

MANIAC isn't concerned with your emotional safety as it chronicles the pedestrian existence of its anti-human anti-hero with the cold, unrelenting eye of a hardcore documentarian, unafraid to let the audience peek in on one of society's most disturbed subjects.

This 4K presentation of Lustig's grimcore masterwork is a solid reminder of why the movie was banned by the BBFC not just once, but twice (for cinema in '81, and again for video in '98), while Roger Ebert and Gene Siskel practically declared a jihad on it via their popular *SNEAK PREVIEWS* television program. This is horror filmmaking at its most primal, unflinchingly realistic and savage, but also strangely empathetic toward a human being who's expressing himself in possibly the only way he knows how. As the tagline for the notorious theatrical poster cautioned audiences who wandered into its 42nd Street premiere on Christmas Day: "I warned you not to go out tonight." (JACOB KNIGHT)



MAY THE DEVIL TAKE YOU

2018 • DIR: TIMO TJAHJANTO • 110 MIN • INDONESIA

Lesmana reluctantly invites a white-robed woman into his home. Proceeding to his creepy basement, she crafts her spell with candles, chanting, mystical runes, and the requisite goat's head. Through the awesome powers of the Devil, the money that Lesmana has long wished for is summoned in a swirling cloud filling the room, and Lesmana's life is destined for greatness... at least until the time comes to pay his dues.

Years later, Lesmana summons his daughter Alfie and her step-siblings to his deathbed where he lies covered in hideous boils. Although she hasn't spoken to him in ten years, Alfie answers the call to discover that she is the sole inheritor of his villa. Hoping that somewhere in the estate might be something of value to stave off their looming bankruptcy, Alfie and her step-family arrive only to meet the Devil as he comes calling for his due, and Alfie's family is drawn into the web of evil her father wove for them years before. Can they break the cycle before the Devil takes them? With super gross-out thrills, an ever-growing sense of freaky

discomfort, and an intense soundtrack, this family road trip to hell is one you'll be talking about all year.

Timo Tjahjanto made his name as half of the Mo Brothers with cult horror and action film favorites MACABRE, KILLERS, his V/H/S 2 segment, and the Fantastic Fest 2016 selection HEADSHOT. This year he's covering all the genre bases by bringing the insane action rollercoaster THE NIGHT COMES FOR US as well! MAY THE DEVIL TAKE YOU is an out-of-the-box, gore-soaked, loud, and totally fun popcorn midnighter that brings Raimi-esque levels of blood-spewing, distorted demons, and high levels of tension and chills. MAY THE DEVIL TAKE YOU is yet another sign that Tjahjanto is one of the best directors the world is lucky to have. (NOAH LEE)





MODEST HEROES: PONOC SHORT FILMS THEATRE, VOL. 1

2018 • DIR: HIROMASA YONEBAYASHI, YOSHIYUKI MOMOSE, AKIHIKO YAMASHITA • 53 MIN • JAPAN

Founded by Yoshiaki Nishimura after the closure of Studio Ghibli and formed by some of the same creative staff, Studio Ponoc's first film, *MARY AND THE WITCH'S FLOWER*, was a breakthrough hit that laid a serious foundation. The studio's second effort — an anthology of short films titled *MODEST HEROES: PONOC SHORT FILMS THEATRE, VOL. 1* — is a testament to the vision and imagination of its creators.

In *KANINI & KANINO*, a pair of crab siblings are separated from their father and find themselves on a grand quest to find him. *LIFE AIN'T GONNA LOSE* focuses on a boy whose severe allergy to eggs means everyday life is incredibly difficult for him. Lastly, *INVISIBLE* closes the trilogy with a story of an invisible man, exploring exactly how an average day in his life might feel.

Uniting the stories is the same heart and soul that has enchanted us over the years, and the unique animation style of each segment keeps the films distinct from each other. A promise of what's to come from this brilliant studio, *MODEST HEROES: PONOC SHORT FILMS THEATRE, VOL. 1* is both an incredible introduction as well as a love letter to an art form that has the power to take us places we never imagined we could visit. (EVRIM ERSOY)





MURDER ME, MONSTER

2018 • DIR: ALEJANDRO FADEL • 109 MIN • ARGENTINA, FRANCE, CHILE

MURDER ME, MONSTER starts off strong and keeps you riveted, featuring a close-up of a slashed throat as the victim desperately tries to keep the head attached to the neck. We are in rural Argentina, lost somewhere in the Andes Mountains, and there's a serial killer on the loose...apparently. Inspector Cruz is called by the police force to investigate the series of murders exacted in spectacular ways and only on women, with the head always missing. The main suspect is David, the husband of Cruz's lover Francisca, who claims a "monster" did it and is communicating with him telepathically, repeating over and over again, "Die, monster, die." Though Cruz is skeptical, the clues keep adding up: green goo and overgrown teeth found near the victims. He's not sure anymore what's real and what's supernatural. Could there really be a monster on the loose?

In this dark fairytale, every shot is a carefully composed painting where the action, colors, and visions merge to take you into a strange elsewhere, and provoke a growing sense of unease, disgust and shock. The entangled storylines broach wider subjects as well, and you can't help but be pulled in.

For his second solo feature, Alejandro Fadel (notably an established screenwriter for Pablo Trapero) decided to come back to Mendoza, where he was born and where the rough and evocative landscapes — literally a real-life Rorschach test — made a lasting imprint on his memory. As much as nature is an active participant in this story, Fadel is principally fascinated by bodies, and that sheer physicality can be seen in this film, built around the way they move and evolve and touch. Special mention for the dancing scene, both unsettling and touching, set to an iconic track, which highlights the troubling gray area that can exist between fantasy and trauma.

Will you understand everything? Probably not. But is the ride worth it? Most definitely. (SONIA DROULHIOLE)

Co-presented with:





THE NIGHT COMES FOR US

2018 • DIR: TIMO TJAHJANTO • 121 MIN • INDONESIA

For years, Ito and his crew were like family. A family of drug-runners and criminals, sure, but a family. But when Ito mysteriously disappears, the balances shifts. His crew splinters, Bobby loses a foot in the ensuing violence, and Arian takes a position in Triad upper management running nightclubs in Macau. Thinking him dead, his girlfriend Shinta moves on with her life.

So when Ito shows up years later with a young girl in tow and the Triads after him, there's a lot to catch up on. The old crew reassembles and tells him about Yohan, the psychotic butcher who took over the drug trade when Ito's crew imploded. Yohan also happens to have a stash of cash that Ito left behind, and he wants it back. Then there's Arian to deal with, after his Triad boss Chien Wu orders him to hunt and kill the child and his old friends. But Chien Wu isn't placing all his faith in Arian and sends an unbelievable onslaught of machete-wielding low-level wannabes to make sure the job gets done.

Director Timo Tjahjanto is back with a vengeance. One half of the creative powerhouse known as The Mo Brothers, a team responsible for MACABRE, KILLERS and Fantastic Fest 2016's HEADSHOT, as well as a killer segment in V/H/S 2, Timo is certainly no stranger to body counts. And yet he seems to be driven to constantly one-up himself, delivering more action set pieces and a higher death toll in this single film than most entire franchises can boast. Starring HEADSHOT's Sunny Pang, THE RAID 2's Zack Lee and Iko Uwais and Joe Taslim from THE RAID with Iko coordinating the action, the film is a veritable who's who of Southeast Asian martial arts superstars. Hold on to your ass because life is truly cheap in this insane roller coaster ride that'll hit you like a shot of adrenaline to your synapses. (LUKE MULLEN)



THE NIGHT SHIFTER

2018 • DIR: DENNISON RAMALHO • 110 MIN • BRAZIL

Stênio can't catch a break. At home, his wife berates him constantly, showing open disdain for him, his hopes of financial stability, and the smell he carries home from his job. At work in the morgue, things are busy and the paramedics don't pass up any opportunities to pull pranks on him, spoiling what little time he might get to himself. If that weren't enough, he can't get the recently departed to shut up.

One day while talking with a newly dead acquaintance, Stênio learns a startling bit of information. Angered by what he has discovered and armed with a city's worth of dead men's secrets, Stênio chooses to use his forbidden knowledge for vengeance. This sets off a series of events that will threaten to destroy Stênio and his family.

Fantastic Fest first welcomed Brazilian filmmaker Dennison Ramalho (writer and chief assistant director of the final Coffin Joe film, EMBODIMENT OF EVIL) in 2010 with his stunning arthouse exploitation short film NINJAS. He most recently returned in 2014 with the equally brutal J IS FOR JESUS segment of ABCS OF DEATH 2. Having proven his absolute willingness to go all-in on the most disturbing and depraved of subjects

and imagery, THE NIGHT SHIFTER marks his feature film debut and, not surprisingly, it is a masterfully dark, twisted, and gory genre-blend with a mean spirit.

As Stênio tries to contain the forces he has unleashed, nobody close to him is safe from metaphysical wrath, and soon children in peril becomes as routine as chatty stiffs during a long night at the city morgue. Ramalho injects the frightening-fantasy-turned-supernatural-horror with a razor-thin streak of humor, so dark you'd be forgiven if you completely missed it. As THE NIGHT SHIFTER ratchets up the terror, setting stakes higher and higher, it never skimps on the scares and goopy special effects.

As one wise corpse tells Stênio — too late, unfortunately — “a dead man's secret is a deadly secret.” And as it turns out, sometimes the fire of someone's rage and the depths of their evil nature become apparent only after they are dead. (BRIAN KELLEY)





ONE CUT OF THE DEAD

2018 • DIR: SHINICHIRO UEDA • 96 MIN • JAPAN

Seriously? Another zombie film? We know... we had the same reaction. Some of us may have even stopped watching thirty minutes into the film. Luckily, we gave it another chance. Why am I telling you this? Because we know you're as weary of the zombie clichés as we are. Trust us: once this film passes the thirty minute mark, you'll fall in love like we did.

This film is so much fun! Shinichiro Ueda constructs a terrific horror comedy with lots of heart around a surprisingly sweet story of a family sticking together when the going gets tough.

Dad is a director hoping for a project that will put him on the map, Mom's an actress whose career was cut short by a debilitating illness, and the daughter is only paying attention to her father's work because he might cast her favorite actor as one of the leads. But they'll come together when Dad is offered a one cut zombie film that will be broadcast live on TV.

It's a situation ripe for chaos, mayhem, and good laughs as the family joins forces to avoid a public disaster.

ONE CUT OF THE DEAD is sharp in its satirization of low-budget filmmaking and the craziness that comes with it. Smart and original, there is no doubt it will become a festival favorite amongst audiences. (ANNICK MAHNERT)





OPEN 24 HOURS

2018 • DIR: PADRAIG REYNOLDS • 100 MIN • USA, SERBIA

In a world where we're inundated with dime-a-dozen, throwaway horror films that clutter our streaming services and cinemas, it's refreshing to find a true gem that both honors the films of the past and offers a fiendish ride that escalates the tension to an explosive end. The Fantastic Fest programming team is honored to premiere OPEN 24 HOURS.

Mary (Vanessa Grasse of LEATHERFACE) has a criminal background. She has done a short stint in the slammer for setting her serial killer boyfriend on fire, a fact she's not afraid to let people know, especially any creeps that come her way. She is being hounded by her parole officer, but despite having a few unsettling premonitions, Mary gets a break and is hired at a low-rent, all-night convenience store in the middle of nowhere.

After being given the quick rundown by the current cashier Bobby (Brendan Fletcher of RAMPAGE and FREDDY VS JASON), Mary's left alone to fend for herself on a damp, ugly night. She's then visited by a few manifestations and a bevy of gas station regulars. As the rain falls, things go off the rails in a serious way.

Padraig Reynolds returns after RITES OF SPRING and THE DEVIL'S DOLLS with a rousing, dark horror film that brings a fresh take on the paranoid delusional protagonist by pairing it with an electric, tension-building roller coaster of a midnighter. There's a clear love of slasher films at work here, but Reynolds circumvents cliché territory. Instead, with a solid cast, a mostly one-location setting, and sharp editing, he brings Fantastic Fest a film that hammers home an exceptionally brutal yet fun thrill ride. (NOAH LEE)





OVERLORD

2018 • DIR: JULIUS AVERY • 109 MIN • USA

In the upcoming WWII horror-thriller **OVERLORD**, a group of American paratroopers drop into Nazi-occupied France on the eve of D-Day. As they struggle to carry out their seemingly impossible mission, they discover a secret Nazi lab carrying out terrifying and bizarre supernatural experiments.

Paramount Pictures will release Bad Robot's **OVERLORD** in the U.S. on Friday, November 9, 2018.

Starring Jovan Adepo, Wyatt Russell, Pilou Asbæk, Mathilde Ollivier, John Magaro, Iain de Caestecker and Dominic Applewhite. Directed by Julius Avery. Produced by J.J. Abrams and Lindsey Weber. Executive Producers are Jo Burn, Jon Cohen and Cory Bennett Lewis. The screenplay is by Billy Ray and Mark L. Smith from a story by Billy Ray.

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PIERCING

2018 • DIR: NICOLAS PESCE • 81 MIN • USA

The genre world has eagerly awaited the second film by Nicolas Pesce following his disturbing 2016 debut, *THE EYES OF MY MOTHER*. Pesce does not disappoint with *PIERCING*, which perpetuates his signature melding of haunting visuals and psychological torment. Christopher Abbott (*IT COMES AT NIGHT*; *JAMES WHITE*; *GIRLS*) stars as Reed, a young businessman and first-time father looking for a way to relieve a little stress. When he finds himself inexplicably standing over his newborn baby with a knife, he realizes it's time to come up with a new strategy. What follows is a journey that initially feels familiar — shady husband goes on a “business trip” and hires a prostitute — but all familiarity disappears when he unveils a meticulous, torture-filled plan to murder said prostitute. For context, all of this happens in the film's first ten minutes. There are many more twists to come.

Abbott stuns in a demented yet restrained performance that deviates so far from his previous work, you'd be excused for not recognizing him. Get particularly excited for

his incredibly accurate murder pantomime, complete with matching sound effects! Mia Wasikowska (*CRIMSON PEAK*; *STOKER*) continues her reign as a low-key genre superstar willing and able to take incredible risks as the endearing and enigmatic prostitute, Jackie. Together, these two develop a bonkers brand of sexual chemistry, complete with violent S&M outbursts and a tug of war of lust, tenderness, and power.

Pesce's vision is a stunning amalgamation of genre references and touchstones — Grindhouse visuals, De Palma split screens, *AMERICAN PSYCHO* voiceovers, and Agatha Christie cat-and-mouse trappings — that still somehow feels wholly fresh and original. Stacked with layers of twists you couldn't possibly see coming and visual hallucinations that will sear themselves in your brain, *PIERCING* is a tightly contained, rapid-fire rollercoaster of genre mastery. (LOGAN TAYLOR)





THE QUAKE

2018 • DIR: JOHN ANDREAS ANDERSON • 105 MIN • NORWAY

Two years ago in *THE WAVE*, you were introduced to a little Norwegian town that got swept away after a landslide caused a tsunami. To quickly recap, our geologist hero and his family made it out alive in a very dramatic way. Some years later, we find the couple separated. Geologist Kristian, who still lives in the small town of Geiranger, suffered a mental breakdown and still struggles to cope with the loss of so many lives. His wife and two kids have moved to Oslo to start over.

When a former colleague is crushed while working in a tunnel in Oslo, Kristian arrives to investigate and discovers that — of course — history is about to repeat itself and — also of course — it's going to be bigger than anyone anticipates. The rest is the classic game of “you need to warn the population” versus “we have everything under control.” While the tropes are familiar, the *schadenfreude* is still so delicious as we scream “He told you so!” at the stupid men on screen while Oslo crumbles. We're all suckers for catastrophe

films where regular people arise as heroes to save the day, but unlike a big budget American spectacle, there's a humanity that anchors the story, supported by amazing special effects produced by Northmen who can hold their own against Hollywood.

The Scandinavians clearly see a dark future for their countries, and if you want to go the whole nine yards, you should pair *THE QUAKE* with its Swedish cousin *THE UNTHINKABLE* and drown your despair in *Brännvin* or *Akevitt*. You may also want to rethink your reservation at the Radisson and ask for a room on a lower floor. (ANNICK MAHNERT)





SAVAGE

2018 • DIR: VINCENT MARIETTE • 83 MIN • FRANCE

It's hot in the South of France and our little campground next to the river is a microcosm of summer clichés: infatuations and unrequited puppy love, Miss Camping elections and corny disco parties, disappearing panties and... disappearing men. A leopard on the loose is supposedly to blame for two victims already.

Laura (Lily-Rose Depp) and her cousin (Aloïse Sauvage) occupy their days with petty theft and fantasizing about boys. Yann, the self-proclaimed local teenage heartthrob, sets his sights on Laura, but after a brief make-out session and her subsequent rejection, he goes missing. Socially weird and disconnected, Laura becomes the focus of police suspicions, but when they come to question her, she's obsessing about the brooding horror writer next door, Paul (a creepy Laurent Lafitte). Given the man-eating animal situation, and convinced that something about him seems off, Laura decides to investigate further and sets a game of cat and mouse in motion, not realizing just how dangerous he could be.

Vincent Mariette changes register for his second feature, co-penning this summer sun-soaked thriller with Marie Amachoukeli, and leaving his usual brand of moving buddy comedy for a deep coming of age tale served by France's most interesting up-and-coming talents. His tour-de-force serves us a universal story about first love in a very unsettling way, slowly building tension through an ever-moving camera, disturbing personas, and an amazingly dread-infused score. SAVAGE brings typical teenage angst to a whole other level, and leaves us unsure of just how much of these relationships are real.

One thing is certain: this summer will leave its mark on everyone. (SONIA DROULHIOLE)





SCHOOL'S OUT

2018 • DIR: SÉBASTIEN MARNIER • 103 MIN • FRANCE

SCHOOL'S OUT is the second feature from Sébastien Marnier, director of the slow-burn 2016 Fantastic Fest thriller FAULTLESS. His newest film opens with the sudden in-class suicide of a high school French teacher — a jarring scene made all the more shocking by one group of students' calm, almost expectant reactions. Enter Pierre Hoffman, a rookie substitute given the impossible task of maintaining classroom normalcy over the stressful last weeks of the school year for his ambitious, gifted, and strikingly mature students. Played by the handsome, charming, and mysterious Laurence Lafitte of ELLE fame (or perhaps notoriety), Pierre becomes a relatable yet unreliable stand-in for the audience's doubts when he starts to sense something off about his students. His growing paranoia slowly devolves into an obsession exacerbated by the hypnotic hold the students seem to have over the rest of the administration, not to mention the violent tendencies the students exhibit outside school grounds.

Marnier's film unfolds with patience and intricate character development, proving that his debut's cleverly escalating thrills were no beginner's luck. His sharp writing and careful directing are further elevated by incredible

performances across the board, particularly from Lafitte as he struggles to prove his suspicions without implicating himself in the process, and from the supporting cast of hauntingly stoic, wiser-than-their-years teenagers that are well-loved by the rest of their community.

Though on the surface it may feel like a familiar story of potentially misguided paranoia, SCHOOL'S OUT refuses to be pigeonholed into any cliché thriller framework. Instead, it defies every audience assumption by extending its narrative far beyond the walls of the prestigious private school, ultimately becoming a broader existential meditation on contemporary society. An exercise in slow, intentional build-up of philosophical dread, SCHOOL'S OUT is impossible to tear your eyes from and equally impossible to predict. (LOGAN TAYLOR)





SHADOW

2018 • DIR: ZHANG YIMOU • 116 MIN • CHINA

Swapping his color palette for an aesthetic largely inspired by the ancient Chinese painting tradition of ink brush, Zhang Yimou presents another historic slice of war and intrigue set in the rich period of the Three Kingdoms.

The king of Pei is a wild and ambitious man who aims to conquer and/or destroy everything in his path, and while he's served loyally by his military commander, his court is full of betrayal and intrigue. To deceive his enemies both in and outside the kingdom, the commander has cultivated a "shadow," a lookalike who can pass for him and easily trick just about anyone. Add the commander's wife into the mix and the stage is set for an explosive and treacherous confrontation.

With brilliant performances by Ryan Zheng as the king and Deng Chao as both the commander and the "shadow," Zhang Yimou's brilliant film mixes stunning visuals with an intricate plot that will both delight and surprise fans of the genre. The scale of the

action scenes is absolutely spectacular, and Yimou's staging of these scenes is nothing short of groundbreaking. Add in a glorious and breathtaking score and SHADOW becomes a film that demands to be seen with the full immersion of the big screen.

Whether you're a die-hard fan or discovering the director for the first time, SHADOW is an experience — like stepping into an ancient painting as it comes to life — that will absolutely enthrall. (EVRIM ERSOY)





THE STANDOFF AT SPARROW CREEK

2018 • DIR: HENRY DUNHAM • 88 MIN • USA

Henry Dunham's tense, taut, breathtaking debut feels like the lovechild of David Mamet and a dime-store pulp thriller. Set over the course of one night, ex-cop Gannon becomes embroiled in the investigation of a mass shooting when that investigation leads to the same militia he joined after quitting the force.

Making the most of its limited setting, both in location and time, Dunham strips the story to its bones, creating a thriller which is as sharp as it is vicious. The characters don't speak as much as bark in staccato pulpy rhythm, and when the violence arrives, it's brutal and very real.

Behind all the bravado, Dunham explores the dynamics of masculinity amid a roster of disenchanted characters, representing that fragment of society who feel themselves at odds with their surroundings. As Gannon utilizes his skills as an investigator and interrogator to get inside the skin of these men, the revelations of what makes them tick reflect back its own understanding of where Gannon's life has taken him: living in a trailer in the middle of nowhere, isolated and wary.

THE STANDOFF AT SPARROW CREEK may be sparse but that does not mean it is simplistic. The cinematography is often astounding, and Dunham's use of long shots to frame the action in a painterly fashion creates an otherworldly beauty that only enhances the central mystery. He understands the limitations of his single location, using it to his advantage as he builds visual layers that serve the film incredibly well.

THE STANDOFF AT SPARROW CREEK is both a throwback and a revelation. Combining the best of single-location thrillers with a new and unwavering eye, Dunham crafts one of the most exciting films of the year. (EVRIM ERSOY)



STARFISH

2018 • DIR: A.T. WHITE • 99 MIN • UNITED KINGDOM, USA

Fantastic Fest receives hundreds of submissions annually, and this year STARFISH was one of the finest discoveries to come across our screens. From first time filmmaker Al White, lead singer of the UK band Ghostlite, comes an unorthodox horror film that meshes an honest portrayal of loss with music, its effect on the world around us, and its connection to the end of the world.

Aubrey is still reeling from the loss of her best friend, Grace. Having attended an awkward wake, she leaves early and assuages her grief by breaking into her friend's flat in hopes of filling the hole in her heart, even if only for a while. Rummaging through the apartment and taking care of Grace's abandoned pets, Aubrey eventually dozes off, but not before playing a mixtape left behind in a tape deck, and being visited by a benevolent vision of her beloved friend.

Aubrey wakes to a world almost unrecognizable. Snow covers the ground outside, the streets are littered with wrecked and abandoned cars, fires burn unabated, and the few people left are running for their

lives or hiding behind locked doors. With the help of a mysterious voice on a walkie talkie and a series of hidden mixtapes left behind by Grace, Aubrey seeks to unravel the mystery of what's been unleashed, hoping that the journey will bring her some closure... and maybe save the world along the way.

STARFISH is not your average chiller by any means. While the scares are here, White instead chooses to address the horror of grief, an emotion every human must eventually face. Not afraid to meld science fiction, indie rock, Lovecraftian creature designs, moments of pure solitude, one outstanding animation sequence, and so much more, the film is a wholly refreshing journey towards the apocalypse. Anchoring the film is an extraordinary performance from Virginia Gardner (RUNAWAYS) who, as Aubrey, does all the heavy lifting in the film. Her quiet despair deftly intertwined with the soundtrack are the emotional testament that both grief and music have the power to change the course of people's lives and possibly the world around us. (NOAH LEE)





STRIKE, DEAR MISTRESS, AND CURE HIS HEART

2018 • DIR: MICKEY REECE • 71 MIN • USA

Fantastic Fest has always endeavored to seek out idiosyncratic auteurs, particular those who ply away in obscurity with meager resources and inspired imaginations. Endearing in part by virtue of their shrewd ingenuity, these productions are foremost beguiling reminders that the mettle of a movie is best measured not by its grasp, but rather its ambition to reach for an indelible and individual identity.

Enter underground Oklahoma filmmaker Mickey Reece. Since 2008, this veritable “Soderbergh of the Sticks” has written, directed, and produced over twenty undistributed no-budget feature films, each one a unique experiment in form, genre and aesthetic, and most of which feature the same cast of eccentric actors culled from his local arts community. As dexterous a creator as he is a compulsive one, Reece’s latest opus marries much of his signature proclivities — misfit protagonists, off-kilter performances, rigorous compositions, and discordant melodrama — as he conjures up a wholly wackadoo psychodrama inspired in part by both Ingmar Bergman’s *AUTUMN SONATA* and *The Velvet Underground*’s “Venus in Furs.”

Proceeding with a detached and dryly hilarious severity reminiscent of Yorgos Lanthimos, *STRIKE DEAR MISTRESS*, AND *CURE HIS HEART* chiefly concerns the acidic reunion of a famous pianist (Mary Buss) and her estranged daughter (Audrey Wagner) within the uncanny corridors of a run-down Victorian hotel. As Reece envelopes these characters in a pervasively unnerving atmosphere, rife with theatrical explosions of emotion and the discordant timbre of Nicholas Poss’s magnificently manic score, he also confidently weaves in a surreal parade of peculiar digressions that deliriously teeter from comic pantomime to tableaux of abject horror. The result is an offbeat and oft-chilling confluence of ingredients that’s guaranteed to simultaneously baffle, delight, and captivate those with an appetite for the strange and unusual.

All fans of the experimental genre shorts that populate Fantastic Fest’s *SHORTS WITH LEGS* sidebar need definitely apply. (PETER KUPLOWSKY)



SUDDEN FURY

1975 • DIR: BRIAN DAMUDE • 91 MIN • CANADA

On the rocks and on the open road of rural Ontario, a crummy husband and his weary wife find themselves careening off a bridge when a petty squabble over a get-rich-quick scheme accelerates into a revelation of infidelity. Both survive, but when the husband discovers his wife's critical condition, he plans to leave her to die in a calculated ploy to collect a hefty life insurance payout. However, his cruel intentions are complicated when a good samaritan happens by the accident and offers to help. What ensues is a wickedly taut and unpredictable cat-and-mouse thriller that evokes the likes of the Coen Brothers' *BLOOD SIMPLE* as it confidently crackles towards its nerve-shredding climax.

While the ill-advised moustaches on display belie campy but indelibly berserk performances, it is one-and-done filmmaker Brian Damude's skillful direction that leaves the biggest impression. An editor by trade, Damude deftly ratchets the tension as his characters contort themselves confronting sustained moral transgressions that anxiously play out with scant dialogue and a weave of judicious cross-cutting and decisive 16mm photography.

SUDDEN FURY was a critical and commercial hit when it was first released at the start of the great white north's infamous Tax-Shelter Era of exploitation cinema, but the lack of a subsequent home video release led to the film being unfairly forgotten in the intervening decades.

Recently rescued from Canadian obscurity and restored by Vinegar Syndrome, this brilliant maple-syrup nail-biter can finally be re-embraced as a bonafide genre classic of suspense and pitch black morality. (PETER KUPLOWSKY)





TERRIFIED

2017 • DIR: DEMIÁN RUGNA • 87 MIN • ARGENTINA

A quiet street in a Buenos Aires neighborhood is disturbed by a series of mysterious and unsettling events. A woman hears hostile voices coming from the sink. Her husband is being driven crazy by his neighbor's 5am remodeling projects. That neighbor — whom nobody has seen recently — has been desperately attempting to get in touch with a paranormal investigator to explain some disconcerting activity in his house. Across the street, a grieving mother makes her own horrific discovery prompting an investigation from a soon-to-retire detective known for his interest in the occult.

The clever ways in which the pieces of TERRIFIED's plot are revealed and woven together are just the beginning of the bountiful joys in store for horror fans. It announces its singular goal clearly from the beginning scenes: to scare the shit out of everyone in the audience. And its commitment to that goal is relentless.

Director Demián Rugna does not constrain himself to a single type of horror in TERRIFIED and culls influences from several other genres. This has the effect of tricking the audience into thinking they know what might happen next. Rugna is obviously well-versed in horror tropes and audiences' expectations of them, and his ability to play with those and turn them inside out is the greatest revelation of the film. If you ever have the notion that you know what TERRIFIED has waiting for you up its sleeve, trust us... you don't.

TERRIFIED is not just a new landmark for Argentine horror, it's a calling card for director Rugna on the international horror stage. From its score, its precisely tuned sound design, and its excellent special effects, to its absolute refusal to keep any character safe, it is expertly crafted to fulfill the horror fan's truest desire: to be totally and deeply terrified. (BRIAN KELLEY)



TUMBBAD

2018 • DIR: RAHI ANIL BARVE & ADESH PRASAD • 108 MIN • INDIA

In the rural village of Tumbbad, young Vinayak has heard the stories of an ancient fortune held by his family for years, but is warned against attempting to attain the treasure lest he fall victim to the demon who guards it. He instead cares for his great-grandmother, a decrepit crone who must remain sated or her appetites might just claim them all. When she dies and he inherits the treasures housed inside a decaying estate, Vinayak discovers that they are not exactly what he expected, but instead an endless bounty protected by a vengeful and ravenous fallen god.

Years later, adult Vinayak (Sohum Shah) has learned to manipulate the god so he can sneak out his boundless fortune one coin at a time. However, it's not enough, and soon a cycle of greed envelops his family. Their avarice threatens to destroy what he has built with the fortune stolen from the terrible creature that lives in the bowels of the castle, and soon enough he learns the terrible, violent secrets of Tumbbad.

No song and dance here, TUMBBAD is an ambitious period film that will turn any preconceived notion of Indian horror on its head. Producer, star, and primary creative force Sohum Shah delivers what is undoubtedly the most exciting pure horror film made in India in at least thirty years. TUMBBAD is the story of a legacy of greed and avarice that spans India's colonial history from the early part of the 20th century, through its independence in 1947 and beyond. This one will stick with you. (JOSH HURTADO)





THE UNTHINKABLE

2018 • DIR: CRAZY PICTURES • 129 MIN • SWEDEN

Scandinavia has emerged as a wellspring for disaster films. While some like *THE WAVE* (Roar Uthaug) are Hollywood-sized spectacles, Scandinavian films usually feature authentic and down-to-earth characters, not oversized and overly-muscled heroes.

THE UNTHINKABLE, which has been flying way under the radar, is the latest disaster epic from the European North, brought to you by a directing collective who've worked together on fifteen shorts before plunging into their first feature. A crowdfunding campaign was successful enough to attract the attention of bigger players, and the result is this amazing tale of survival, family, choices, and loss.

Initially framed as a troubled family drama, the story centers on an ex-military man whose outbursts of rage are pushing away his wife and son. It's a somber start, and the path this film takes get even darker, in such a surprising way you'll probably be asking yourself, "What the fuck am I seeing?"

To say anything more would be to reveal too much. Don't Google this film; it's worth going in blind. *THE UNTHINKABLE* captures what US cinema did best in the '80s, stories about fear and retaliation. It's a tale of people pulled into an incredible situation that will linger and haunt you. (ANNICK MAHNERT)





VIOLENCE VOYAGER

2018 • DIR: UJICHA • 83 MIN • JAPAN

Ujicha's second feature returns to the animation technique of "Gekimation," which he also employed with his debut film *THE BURNING BUDDHA MAN* five years ago. Doing almost everything himself (animation, visual concept, cinematography, editing), this tale set in the present-day Japanese countryside has a plot so bizarre that it borders on the fucked up.

Two kids, an American expat named Bobby (and after this film, you will never want to hear the name Bobby again) and his Japanese friend Akkun, want to visit a friend in a village on the other side of the mountain. While looking for a legendary shortcut, they stumble upon an amusement park called *Violence Voyager*. The kids are blissfully unconcerned at the lack of other children, and even the discovery of a mummified girl doesn't set off any internal alarms. Their adventure descends into a nightmare

involving naked humanoid robots and suspicious adults leading to a metamorphosis for each of our young heroes.

The Gekimation technique on display is absolutely fascinating, and the work behind it is mind-blowing. Using painstakingly detailed hand-painted paper cutouts and adding real fluids (and doesn't that sound disturbing?) gives *VIOLENCE VOYAGER* a layer of visceral realism. The comparisons to Cronenberg and Otomo are inevitable due to the body transformations, but Ujicha's story ideas are uniquely his own. This doubtlessly makes him one of the most interesting animators around, and we should all keep an eye out for his future works. (ANNICK MAHNERT)





WEREWOLF

2018 • DIR: ADRIAN PANEK • 88 MIN • POLAND, THE NETHERLANDS, GERMANY

February 1945, Concentration Camp Gross-Rosen: The war may be over, but for one group of young survivors, the ordeal is not. Taken by the Russian soldiers who freed them to an abandoned palace in the middle of the woods, they are welcomed by an older woman, jaded by years of deprivation, who is to take care of them. Our protagonists are a pack of wild things from all ages, kids without names or identity, a dysfunctional family welded together by horror more than love, and their re-entry into a semblance of normality proves to be no easy feat. Waiting for supplies that do not come from the Russians, they decide to forage in the woods for food, but instead find the matriarch dead, her face devoured. Soon their orphanage is beset by a pack of dogs, feral ravenous creatures — the same dogs used by the prison guards at the camp. Once disciplined, they've since been driven mad by hunger. Hanna, one of the older children, takes charge as they do their best to survive the monsters outside...and those inside too.

Adrian Panek's second feature chews on tough questions about man-made monsters and civilization vs. wilderness. Once freed, our group of nameless children celebrate by stomping a rat to death in a dark communal ritual, evidence of how they have been shaped by the atrocities they've survived. Having been debased to the level of animals, how do they re-enter the "normal" world? It can't just be about cutlery and table manners. The orphanage symbolizes a sort of purgatory, a limbo where they're stuck, imprisoned again by those snarling teeth. They can only escape and return to the normal world once they've conquered the dogs, their pasts and their own characters.

Through stark images, gorgeously shot landscapes, and amazing actors, the director forces us to confront the inevitability of horror, the gruesomeness of the survival instinct, and the battle to reclaim one's humanity. (SONIA DROULHIOLE)



WHEN THE TREES FALL

2018 • DIR: MARYSIA NIKITIUK • 88 MIN • UKRAINE, POLAND, MACEDONIA

Writer-director Marysia Nikitiuk's feature debut is an explosion of energy that fuses several genres to create a film which heralds the arrival of a new and exciting voice on the moviemaking scene.

Somewhere within the Ukraine, Scar and Larysa are teenage lovers suffocated by their surroundings. Their village is governed by tradition and archaic rules, and ex-jailbird Scar is not a welcome presence. Larysa's aging grandmother insists that she settle down and live her life in the prescribed ways. As these outside demands intrude ever more into their sensual inner world, Scar and Larysa must each take up a challenge: Scar to take on a big criminal job that requires him to travel to the crumbling city of Lozova, and Larysa to wait for him while an arranged marriage threatens to undermine her resolve. As each faces their own battle, change will force everyone to re-evaluate their existence.

Fusing magical realism and straight drama, WHEN THE TREES FALL is an exploration of life within post-Soviet Ukraine that explodes in bravura sequences which suggest a much richer inner life for the trapped characters. Nature is an uncontrollable force of power and beauty, reflected in our young leads and denied by the rest of the village. Blending the supernatural with the mundane, the film creates a world in which everything may be possible.

Nikitiuk's debut is a film designed to confound, outrage, and inspire, a film that demands to be re-watched and will spur debate long after the credits have rolled. Visually stunning, expertly edited, and brilliantly engaging, it is a piece of cinema that makes you sit up, take notice and never forget. (EVRIM ERSOY)





WHITE FIRE

1984 • DIR: JEAN-MARIE PALLARDY • 98 MIN • FRANCE, TURKEY, UNITED KINGDOM

Bo Donnelly has a pretty sweet life. After barely escaping the soldiers who killed their family, he and his sister Ingrid have built a comfortable home in Istanbul. Oh, and they run an elite squad that risks life and limb to smuggle diamonds. Their world is turned upside down when a chance encounter reveals the location of the incredible White Fire Diamond. The stuff of legend, the jewel is massive, nearly 2,000 carats, and — a bizarre but important detail — it paranormally burns people. But when other enterprising criminal groups find out about it, Bo and his crew will find that this particular diamond might just be too hot for them to handle.

Starring the late Robert “The Exterminator” Ginty and the great Fred “The Hammer” Williamson, *WHITE FIRE* is an odd mishmash of action scenes, attempts at comedy, and surprisingly brutal and gory deaths. Sprinkle in a bizarre quasi-romantic subplot between Bo and Ingrid (yes, the brother and sister), and this thing is just packed to the gills with crazy. It features montages, flamethrowers, jarring

edits, plastic surgery, and its own theme song from British rock group Limelight dropped in whenever they aren’t sure what else to do — not to mention plenty of Williamson’s signature swagger. Did I mention that its vaguely futuristic production design is never explained? Maybe it takes place in 2029 or in an alternate universe. Who can say? And who the hell knows why the diamond burns anyone who touches it.

Also called *VIVRE POUR SURVIVRE* and *LE DIAMANT*, *WHITE FIRE* is a forgotten gem (haha) that calls to mind everything from *THE BLUE LAGOON* to *FACE/OFF*. We are so excited to bring you, our discerning audience, this 2K restoration of 1985’s wildly off-the-wall diamond heist joyride. (LUKE MULLEN)





THE WIND

2018 • DIR: EMMA TAMMI • 89 MIN • USA

On the surface, prairie life in the late 1800s looks simple enough for Lizzy. She's only expected to be a good wife, take care of the home, and have children. But something in those wide open plains is after her. Maybe it's just the wind, maybe it's an animal, maybe it's something more sinister. Whatever it is, it's slowly driving her mad. When a young woman appears on her doorstep, Lizzy feels she finally has someone to talk to and share her fears with. Soon, however, it becomes clear this new force in her life may not be a positive one.

The film unfolds out of order, with the ultimate chronology slowly unveiling itself as though it were a series of memories. The very first scene makes clear that something awful is in store for everyone on screen, and that incredible sense of dread never lets up.

Consisting of very little spoken dialogue and stunning panoramas of the wide open plains, *THE WIND* presents a meditative, sun-soaked world that is unexpected and under-explored in supernatural horror films. Director Emma

Tammi, however, has no problem finding atmospheric terror hidden in these vistas and lurking around the family's modest farm home. Largely, she relies on a soundscape consisting of amorphous howls of wind — and maybe something more animalistic — to unhinge both her characters and the audience.

Featuring grounded, restrained, yet dynamic performances by Caitlin Gerard (*INSIDIOUS: THE LAST KEY*) and Julia Goldani Telles (*SLENDER MAN*), plus supporting turns by male actors that echo contemporary examples of toxic masculinity, it's a timely exploration of the larger issues at hand for expectant mothers and women in domestic spaces. And though there are folkloric, supernatural elements at play, the story works just as effectively as a bold, fresh, and important tale of gender-based psychological destruction and perceived hysteria. (LOGAN TAYLOR)





THE WOLF HOUSE

2018 • DIR: CRISTÓBAL LEÓN & JOAQUÍN COCIÑA • 73 MIN • CHILE

Directors Cristóbal León and Joaquín Cociña's **THE WOLF HOUSE** marks their transition into feature animation from the many shorts and artwork they've previously produced, building upon their solid foundation of striking imagery and inventive storytelling.

Framed by a coda that sells the film as a restored piece of history from the archives of a German colony that exists in the Chilean countryside, **THE WOLF HOUSE** immediately establishes a sense of unease that gradually snowballs into an endless journey of existential dread as we watch the alleged vintage film. It's seemingly a children's story that recounts what happens to Maria who, as a punishment, is forced to spend a hundred days and hundred nights alone in a cabin in the woods.

To reveal more would take away from the breathtaking storytelling on display. Utilizing a wholly individual animation style, the co-directors construct a world of horror that feels like the kind of evil that we somehow suspect

underpins our society, an unsettling human condition buried deep within our psyche. The visual detail on display is astounding, with shadows blending into the walls which crumble and roll into creatures both familiar and unrecognizable whilst the environment is perpetually shifting and morphing, inventing a frightening but beautiful setting that traps the audience as well as Maria.

It is not often we encounter a piece of filmmaking that is so assured in its intentions and so astute in how to achieve them. **THE WOLF HOUSE** is a compelling, enigmatic, and evil puzzle box that continues to burrow into your subconscious long after the film has ended and there's nothing but shadows left in the cinema. (EVRIM ERSOY)





YOU MIGHT BE THE KILLER

2018 • DIR: BRETT SIMMONS • 92 MIN • USA

YOU MIGHT BE THE KILLER opens with a bang. Screams, gore, and slasher mayhem tear across the screen with vibrant title cards counting out the total number of dead counselors (current score: A LOT). Sam (Fran Kranz), the head counselor at this remote camp, is safely cooped up in a cabin with a working cell phone, but instead of contacting the police, he calls his friend Chuck (the always-delightful Alyson Hannigan) in a panic.

Chuck is well-versed in slasher movie tropes and leads Sam through all the necessary steps to survive the night while also helping him remember each step that has led to this point. Told from the perspective of the third act looking back upon the horrors and plot twists through flashback, it's a full reversal of the beats one expects in this subgenre. Rather than endearing us to the characters slowly so we fear for their deaths, we're shown their deaths almost immediately upon meeting them. Ultimately, instead of being about one-dimensional sexy teens meeting their demise, it's about the joys of both the

kill and the genre itself. Similarly, the film's secrets are unveiled in an unexpected order: we learn the killer's identity before we're told who's dead. But really, this reveal is just the start of the fun.

In the vein of some of the great meta-horror-comedies of the last decade like *THE CABIN IN THE WOODS* and *FINAL GIRLS*, *YOU MIGHT BE THE KILLER* is a colorful, goofy, self-aware film loaded with spunky performances from some of the most recognizable faces of the Whedonesque world of horror-comedy. Director Brett Simmons takes his initial inspiration from a viral Twitter conversation between *NY Times* bestselling authors Sam Sykes and Chuck Wendig, and spins it into a fresh new take on the slasher genre, brimming with clever kills, demented humor, and refreshing subversions of expectations. (LOGAN TAYLOR)



KOREAN GENRE SHORTS

SHORTS WITH KIMCHI



HUMAN STONE

2018 • DIR: Lee Hyun-woo • 22 min • South Korea

A high stakes game of Go between two national champions becomes dramatized as an exhilarating and skillfully choreographed martial arts brawl.



THE LADY FROM 406

2018 • DIR: Lee Kyoung-mi • 14 min • South Korea

Lee Yeong-ae (LADY VENGEANCE) portrays the titular tenant at the heart of this beguiling psychodrama about a woman driven mad by the habits of her upstairs neighbor.



LAL LA LAND

2018 • DIR: Lee Won-suk • 20 min • South Korea

A fading movie star tries to contemporize his image in order to seize the limelight once more in this nostalgic musical comedy that pays tribute to the two former Korean action icons who star in it, and the cult classics they made.



PEPPER

2018 • DIR: Jayil Pak • 15 min • South Korea, USA

In an allegory of reincarnation, a ghost goes on a journey that reveals how devastating the persistence of strict gender roles can be on the human spirit.



UNKNOWN WOMAN

2018 • DIR: Kim Jong-kwan • 10 min • South Korea

A peculiar encounter with a stranger inspires a man to reflect on the fallibility of his own memory in this enigmatic meditation on the mutability of relationships.

Please see website or webapp for icon assignments for the shorts programs.

FANTASTIC SHORTS



HI-FIVE THE CACTUS

2018 • DIR: Christopher Allan Thomas • 9 min • USA

A cowboy cactus learns to hug without harming in this whimsical stop-motion wild west musical.



O.I.

2018 • DIR: N'cee van Heerden • 19 min • Canada

A man discovers the hard way that not everyone can handle a truly original idea.



PETITE AVARIE

2018 • DIR: Léo Hardt & Manon Alirol • 20 min • France

In this pitch-black comedy, a cancer diagnosis ignites a shockingly cruel yet uncompromisingly honest lover's quarrel.



PIZZAMONSTER

2018 • DIR: Kurt Platvoet • 12 min • The Netherlands

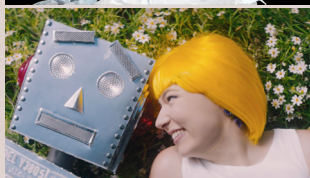
After a broken heart is fed with a lot of pizza, the leftovers quite literally manifest a new companion.



PUPPET MASTER

2018 • DIR: Hanna Bergholm • 15 min • Finland

A woman seeks the tender caress of a man in this balletic exploration of the intersections of transformation, interdependence, and desire.



SPACE FLOWER

2018 • DIR: Pam Covington • 13 min • USA

The forbidden love between the heir to an interstellar potato chip empire and her robotic beau illustrates the age-old adage that parents just don't understand.



SQUIRREL

2018 • DIR: Alex Kavutskiy • 16 min • USA

A meager apology tests a woman's fortitude to forgive in this expertly deadpan comedy that wittily articulates the oft selfish objectives that belie performative remorse.

Please see website or webapp for icon assignments for the shorts programs.



SHORT FUSE

PRESENTED BY STAGE 13



ACID

2017 • DIR: Just Philippot • 18 min • France

A family desperately attempts to outrun an acidic stormcloud in this gory white-knuckle thriller.



CHOWBOYS: AN AMERICAN FOLKTALE

2018 • DIR: Astron-6 • 9 min • Canada

Canada's infamous cult collective reunite with another winning niche genre pastiche, this time lampooning the wintry western as they ricochet from absurdist hijinx to grotesque splatter.



DRUM WAVE

2018 • DIR: Natalie Erika James • 10 min • Australia

A newlywed woman finds herself encroached upon by a malaise of dread as her husband's family expects her to participate in a series of disconcerting fertility rituals. Low-key horror that simmers and haunts.

Please see website or webapp for icon assignments for the shorts programs.



A HAUNTING

2018 • DIR: Paul Vance • 17 min • USA

A musician struggling to keep a supernatural affliction in check reluctantly indulges the wishes of zealous fan, but what begins as a comedic spook-em-up disturbingly creeps towards severe terror.



HELSINKI MANSPLAINING MASSACRE

2018 • DIR: Ilja Rautsi • 15 min • Finland

Splatter doesn't come more inspired or timely than this award-winning and riotous horror-comedy that swaps out your garden-variety backwoods cannibals for a pack of violently patronizing men.



RILEY WAS HERE

2018 • DIR: Jon Rhoads & Mike Marrero • 14 min • USA

As the world recovers from a devastating pandemic, two weary souls partake in a dangerous ritual in an effort to cope with their loss.



SONGBIRD

2018 • DIR: Helen Baldwin • 17 min • USA

A young man develops a sadomasochistic relationship with a series of photographs; their only recourse is to team up and take revenge.



SPECIAL DAY

2018 • DIR: Teal Greyhavens • 7 min • USA

A freaky family revelation kills a young woman's enthusiasm on her birthday and then just plain kills, kills, kills in this wickedly wound fright fest.



STIGMA

2018 • DIR: David Velduque • 14 min • Spain

The bug bite that disrupts a Friday night hookup turns out to be a manifestation of something much scarier.



SHORTS WITH LEGS



THE BEANING

2017 • DIR: Sean McCoy • 10 min • USA

There's no other way to explain the New York Yankees' unrivaled MLB success: a cold-blooded human sacrifice it is.



COLD FISH

2018 • DIR: Alyssa Traitz • 10 min • USA

A lonely woman with a lonely goldfish finds herself at the mercy of a rampaging intruder.



EMOTION 93

2017 • DIR: Oz Davidson • 7 min • USA

Soaked in a hypnotic lo-fi aesthetic, a familiar body-swapping plot embraces the existential identity anxieties inherent in the premise.



ENTROPIA

2017 • DIR: Marimah Janello • 15 min • USA

An older woman goes to esoteric and decidedly unsanitary lengths to revitalize herself in this poetically grotesque 16mm portrait.



HAIR: THE STORY OF GRASS

2018 • DIR: Maha Al-Saati • 15 min • Saudi Arabia

Cultural attitudes towards beauty standards are exhaustively unpacked in this delirious satire, about how hair dictates the social mobility of a put-upon caretaker and her intellectually challenged ward.



PAN

2017 • DIR: Yugo Sakamoto & Nagiko Tsuji • 17 min • Japan

In this deranged and unpredictable comedy, a passionate aficionado of bread stages a revolution against a tyrannical baker.



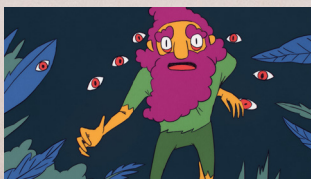
THE PASSAGE

2018 • DIR: Kitao Sakurai • 22 min • USA

A man escapes again and again as he's pursued by pagan cultists in this sprawling episode of sublime and humanist surrealism produced as a pilot for Adult Swim.

Please see website or webapp for icon assignments for the shorts programs.

SHORTS PAIRED WITH FEATURES



ALBATROSS SOUP

2018 • DIR: Winnie Cheung • 7 min • USA

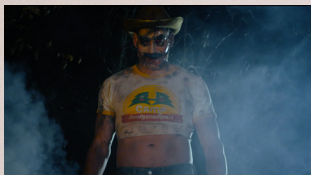
Delightfully fluid animation lyrically complements a chorus of voices attempting to investigate a puzzling suicide posited by an idiosyncratic riddle.



BEDRIDDEN

2018 • DIR: Franklin Ritch • 12 min • USA

After a night of regrets, a cascade of sinister threats from an omniscient voice paralyzes a young woman into state of perpetual fear. A potent premise, profound in execution.



THE BLOODY BALLAD OF SQUIRT REYNOLDS

2018 • DIR: Anthony Cousins • 8 min • USA

A twisted campfire tale quickly accelerates into a barrage of inspired and gory slasher gags meted out by a body-building, 'stache-sporting fiend.



CATCALLS

2017 • DIR: Kate Dolan • 9 min • Ireland

He's on the prowl, but so are they. A satisfying and bloody swipe at street harassers.



CATERPILLARPLASTY

2018 • DIR: David Barlow-Krelina • 5 min • Canada

Amidst a grotesque but slickly animated menagerie of extreme plastic surgery, a man demands an operation that will realize his inner butterfly.



CC

2018 • DIR: Kailey Spear & Sam Spear • 14 min • Canada

An AID (Artificially Intelligent Device) nanny named CC follows her programming to the letter of the code in order to protect her ward's best interests.

Please see website or webapp for icon assignments for the shorts programs.

SHORTS PAIRED WITH FEATURES



END TIMES

2018 • DIR: Bobby Miller • 9 min • USA

A man in mourning, portrayed with aching empathy by Robert Longstreet (*THE MISSING GIRL*), is confronted and existentially confounded by the final moments of a dying squirrel.



FEAST ON THE YOUNG

2017 • DIR: Katia Mancuso • 13 min • Australia

Two sisters skirt the perimeter of a bloodthirsty creature's domain in this exquisitely photographed foray into fairy folklore.



FLOOR 9.5

2017 • DIR: Toby Meakins • 2 min • United Kingdom

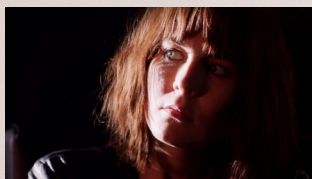
If ever an elevator stops on a floor you don't recognize, and the doors open to a quiet plea for help, pray you hold your ground; so warns this succinct tango of terror.



GOODNIGHT

2018 • DIR: Diane Michelle • 10 min • USA

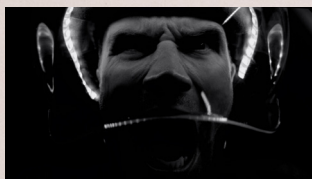
A mother investigates her daughter's belief that a malevolent presence has been visiting her at night. A deeply unsettling permutation of the ol' "there's-a-monster-under-my-bed" chestnut.



GUTTER

2018 • DIR: Josh Ethier • 10 min • USA

Sleep in, stay up late, stomp and repeat; it's one way to live. The grizzly directorial debut of prolific genre editor Josh Ethier.



INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY

2018 • DIR: Mathew Nelson • 11 min • USA

Stark and strikingly photographed speculative fiction that documents the first accident involving a driverless car with a peculiar poetic air and patient but absorbing rhythms.

SHORTS PAIRED WITH FEATURES



KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT

2018 • DIR: Dan Roe • 9 min • USA

A witness takes a vow of silence to ensure his survival, but can he keep it?



LAURA & VINETA

2017 • DIR: Roberts Kulenko • 20 min • Latvia

A potato farmer connects with the injured alien that crash-landed in his field, much to the chagrin of the local authorities.



LIQUID SOUL

2018 • DIR: Allen Reed Phillips & Trampas Monroe Smith • 13 min • USA

Huffing gasoline affords a lovesick trucker a delirious high, but consequently inspires both inner homilies and attempted homicides in this raw but arresting surrealist southern gothic.



THE MENU

2018 • DIR: Atli Sigurjónsson • 13 min • USA, Iceland

A couple tries to reignite the spark in their relationship with some adventurous culinary pursuits.



MONSTAGRAM

2017 • DIR: Jerome Sable • 3 min • USA

A cautionary tale about the absurdly dire consequences of oversharing on social media from the director of award-winning Fantastic Fest favorite THE LEGEND OF BEAVER DAM.



MONSTER CHALLENGE

2017 • DIR: Michael Giacchino • 13 min • USA

Famed composer Michael Giacchino catapults a hapless Patton Oswalt (as himself) into an outrageous series of challenges in his infectiously silly tribute to the eccentricities of Japanese game shows.



MY NAME IS MARC, AND YOU CAN COUNT ON IT

2017 • DIR: Lindsey Phillips • 13 min • USA

Count on an amusing confluence of abject eccentricity and infectious endearment as this documentary introduces you to one of the country's most bizarre series of furniture store TV spots.

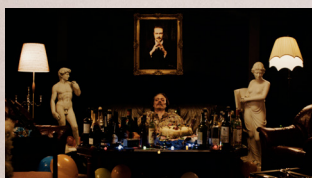
SHORTS PAIRED WITH FEATURES



OCCUPANT

2018 • DIR: Peter Cilella • 4 min • USA

First you hear it, then you see it, and then it is too late. A quiet vignette of extraterrestrial eeriness.



ROSALINA

2018 • DIR: Fredrik S. Hana • 20 min • Norway

Acclaimed Fantastic Fest alum Fredrik S. Hana (SISTER HELL) returns with a stylish psychodrama that captures a mobster's disintegrating mental state as he's confronted by the debilitating insecurity that his material wealth will never afford him true love.



SALT

2017 • DIR: Rob Savage • 2 min • United Kingdom

The creators of DAWN OF THE DEAF pit Alice Lowe (PREVENGE) against a demonic entity with a single weakness: a ring of salt. Breathlessly paced bite-sized terror.



THE SLOWS

2018 • DIR: Nicole Perlman • 20 min • USA

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY scribe Nicole Perlman makes her directorial debut with this captivating speculative fiction that depicts a utopia founded upon the elimination of childhood.



SPRITES

2018 • DIR: Kyle Bogart • 16 min • USA

Why work with actors when you can hire SPRITES?



A THING OF DREAMS

2018 • DIR: K. Spencer Jones & Jake Wilkens • 11 min • USA

When a new prescription drug permits a greater lucidity of one's dreams, a woman resists her jealous husband's demands that she induce a nightmare in order to scrub her subconscious of infidelity.



TIME ENFORCER

2018 • DIR: Jimmy Nickerson • 11 min • USA

Time travel is illegal and even the best intentions to change the past will not be tolerated in this low-fi homage to timecopers everywhere.

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